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THE GREAT  
PYRAMIDS OF GIZA

From a photograph by Sebah, Nubia

Abou-Simbel



# ISLAM LANDS

NUBIA,  
THE SUDAN,  
TUNISIA AND ALGERIA

BY

MICHAEL MYERS SHOEMAKER

Author of "Islands of the Southern Seas,"  
"Wanderings in Ireland," "Winged Wheels in France," etc.

*WITH 44 ILLUSTRATIONS*

G. P. PUTNAM'S SONS

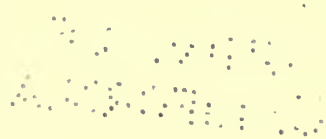
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To

MY WIFE

THIS RECOLLECTION OF OUR WANDERINGS IN THE LANDS

OF THE WANING CRESCENT





## PREFACE

IT is suggested that my title, *Islam Lands* "is not euphonious." Granted—but if it were so it could not be applied to the Orient. The East is a paradox, so to speak. It is charming and shocking, picturesque and horrible; beautiful in its panoramas yet discordant in its voices and music. Therefore—to my thinking—a euphonious title would be inappropriate for this book; whereas the one I use brings to my mind and ear the clatter and clangour and all the contradictions of the lands of the waning crescent.

In another work I have described the farther Orient,<sup>1</sup> *i.e.*, those lands beyond the Caspian Sea. Here, while we do not leave what might be called the nearer Orient, I think it is less known, to the thousands who sail past its shores, than those more distant sections in Central Asia. True, countless numbers have visited the cities and traversed the railways of Algeria and Tunisia. I did so twenty years ago but not until this later journey was completed did I realise that in the earlier one I had seen comparatively nothing,

<sup>1</sup> *Heart of the Orient*, by M. M. Shoemaker, G. P. Putnam's Sons.

that only with the winged wheels of a motor can justice be done to Northern Africa. Before that, however, our wanderings had taken us up the green valley of the Nile to the grisly Sudan—fascinating yet intolerable,—where the spirit of Gordon and the wraiths of his murderers haunted our days and dreams. After that we sailed the seas until Tunisia spread before our eyes a garden of the *Great God* who is above *all* religions and creeds. There we motored away, over the most superb roads in the world, through Tunisia—Roman, Christian, and Islamic—to the gates of the holy city of Kārawân, thence, on past the ruins of Carthage to stately Timgad crowning her hill, and then out into the silence of the Garden of Allah where the figures of life seemed but painted on the curtains of a dream and one dropped backward through the ages to stately Bible days and downward again to the joy of living as the car glided through the gorges and over the mountains of Algeria until, in Oran, we had our last touch of African sunshine, our last glimpse of Islam Lands.

M. M. S.

UNION CLUB, May, 1910.

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# ISLAM LANDS



# ISLAM LANDS

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## CHAPTER I

Southward from Assouan—Life on the Upper Nile—Korosko  
—Kasr Ibrim—Queen Candace—Approach to Abû-  
Simbel—The Great Temple—Fellow Travellers—Im-  
pressions of Abû-Simbel—A Traveller of the Year 594  
B.C.

WHEN the divine Isis deserted Egypt for ever, she passed over the edge of the world and sought her home in space. We have a like feeling as our boat turns southward from the cataract. Philæ is dead and the waters are fast burying her out of sight. Europe and the life we have lived is all behind us.

Far before and around, seared with the burning heat which pours down all day, and cracked by the cold of night, rise the desolate hills of Nubia. The day of judgment appears to have come and gone leaving the land desolate with no sign or sound of life save the plash of our paddle-wheels, and one feels that even that should be hushed



away. It's almost sacrilege to journey up this river and through this old, old land in a puffing steamboat, and one longs for the towering lateen sails of the dahabeah and the soft hush, hush of the waters as they glide past its keel, misses the drifting dream life; but since that we cannot have, let us take the good the gods have sent us and be thankful.

This is a small boat, and we are but a half dozen and let each other alone, and sometimes much comes from "letting each other alone." There is no touch of the tourist ship about the craft except when the dragoman comes in to tell us what he thinks we should see; but to him we pay no sort of attention and he soon glides back into the outer darkness and the lower deck, where he can be heard grumbling over his possible loss of cash from a lot who appreciate him not at all and will have none of him. I think he regards me as prime offender as I can see the gleam of his eyes directed toward me from the dark below and in no friendly fashion. The sojourner in upper Egypt to-day is often impressed with the belief that it would take but little to undo the effects of England's dominion and start these people into savage action, when it would go hard with us on this upper deck, but that is not likely to happen just now.

The whole character of the Nile and its scenery has changed with the passing of the cataract. The wide green valleys and prospects of distant

mountains and deserts have disappeared. From where the rocks gripped the river at Assouan and far to the southward, the barren hills, all black and yellow, crowd down to the very brink, with only a patch here and there of vivid green. Each oasis, be it ever so small, holds its quota of human life: sometimes a white house or the glistening dome of a sheik's tomb but more often the low mud hut of the native near which a camel is tethered or a donkey asleep.

The soil does not appear productive yet it is claimed that there is no starvation. Men live and support their families better on one franc per day than in England on eight shillings. However, the conditions and requirements are very different. These people want but little—a mud house with a roof of palm branches, a few grains of corn or some beans, a sheep now and then, and some water. Of the latter there is never any lack especially since the building of the great barrages (dams). The one at the first cataract has turned the Nile into a lake for more than one hundred miles to the southward.

The character of the temples has changed with the land and grown grisly and forbidding. Philæ's graceful columns slowly sinking beneath the rising river are the last of the kind, and our first in Nubia, Gerf Husên the ancient Tutzis, is wholly rock cut, and but a cave in the desolate mountains. It is called by the Egyptians the abode of "Pthah." All around it and down the

mountains behind pours the deluge of bright yellow sand with no green thing even by the river. Within in the shadowy darkness one finds a hall whose roof is supported by four Osiride columns of Rameses, facing two by two, with arms crossed and with the solemn far-off gaze upon the strong faces known only in this dead world or on the statues of Buddha. How many times before such faces in Egypt, in Java, in Burma, and China I have vainly endeavoured to find some point where those inscrutable eyes would look into mine, but always in vain. We mortals are far too near, those eyes look above or through but ever far beyond us.

! As our boat glides southward, across the brilliant orange of the sands slowly moves a procession of black-robed figures, and in the deep blue overhead a vulture, sable as the night, floats motionless. A new moon is just sinking in the west. Silence and God keep tryst here, and nothing moves lest a word be lost. Then the day ends and darkness falls, and we turn to our books once more.

Morning brings us to where, at Korosko, we first find traces of General Gordon. From here he started by caravan on his fatal journey to Khartoum. The point is of no importance now, and one sees but a collection of roofless mud barracks, and some glories of palms. Korosko has done its work and the world has no further use for it.



From a photograph by Miss Helen Parmelee  
The Banks of the Nile



Our boat comes to rest for the night close under the towering cliff of Kasr Ibrim, one hundred and thirty-four miles south of the cataract. The summit of the cliff is thickly covered with ruins and after dinner we climb up there on a tour of inspection. Evidently a Roman fortress, whose stones were taken from some far more ancient structure, the place is not in itself of great interest, but the rather stiff climb is amply rewarded by the prospect over river and desert.

For miles to the north and south the Nile twists away like a silver ribbon thrown out by some giant hand, while to the north and south, to the east and west, spread away, ridge after ridge, the mountains of the desert. In the west hangs the crescent of a new moon, but of life of any sort, save ourselves, there is no evidence. It might be a world of the dead and that the river Styx below there; it certainly *is* far more a world of the dead than of the living, and soon even our voices faltered away into silence.

On the Arabian side there is nothing to be seen save tombs, but the Libyan shore gives traces of fertility greater at some former time than now. Greeks, Romans, Saracens, and Turks have in turn held this rock, which like the Rhine castles evidently was of value as it commanded the river for miles. It was a most important point during the wars of Queen Candace with the Romans. We are told that she was of great courage and one eye.

Her invasion of Egypt, coming twenty-two years before our era, found Cleopatra just dead and all the land in the hands of Rome. Under the walls of her old fortress our dreams are full of her wars and defeat, and her one great eye seems gazing all night into our window, but it is only the moon and we slumber on until awakened by the starting of our boat. Breakfast time finds us far up the Nile.

The morning is brilliant and sparkling, the river and the desert and the sky almost dance with life. A sudden turn and we are headed directly toward a yellow mountain, clear cut against a blue and cloudless sky. The pale green waters wash its base and on a platform somewhat elevated four great seated colossi are watching our approach.

From the mountains above a swirl of yellow sand has descended, almost hiding them, but some giant hand has drawn it, curtain like, aside and so those faces watch us as we approach. Even from here, and we are quite a mile away, the far-away tranquillity of expression is plainly visible, and yet they *seem* to watch us; but as we draw nearer we discover that they have not even seen us but like all those others are gazing at something off and beyond, and we turn instinctively to see what it is, but whatever it may be, it is far beyond our seeing.

Even a weary tourist of this twentieth century must be impressed as he approaches Abû-Simbel,



and our company, fortunately very limited in numbers, is very quiet. This temple is the end and aim of most who sail this river and the determination to see it is, unknowingly perhaps, implanted in every one who enters Egypt. It was so in my case when thirty years ago I was forced to turn backward at Thebes. I remember standing long before a photograph of Abû in Cairo and vowing then that some day I would see it, and am I disappointed now that I really am before it? I think not, certainly not yet, for the hand of man has never fashioned anything more majestic than Abû-Simbel. Philæ, though beautiful, is like Edfu and Esna, but this gigantic and stately rock-cut temple stands unique and unrivalled in all the world. As we sail towards it from a lonely niche above the river gazes out at us a statue of Hathor, the sacred cow—she is here called the Lady of Abshek (Aboccis), the ancient name of Abû-Simbel, and being in Ethiopia there is the sign signifying “foreign land.” Here also is the wife of Rameses II., Queen “Nefert-Ari,” standing solitary and gazing out over the river whose waters at flood must wash her feet. Now, however, she is enthroned high and lonely and looks reproachfully at us as we glide past. What was her history—her daily life? It is difficult to imagine that she lived and loved, hated and died as we have done and shall do. Did life hold anything for her, or was she like most of her sex in the Orient, relegated to the



vapid life of a harem? If so, why bother to immortalise her in that lonely niche above this sacred river?

As our boat glides nearer I look around to see what effect the great temple has upon our company. Some of them are gazing as though they could not with one pair of eyes each see enough of it. The naturalist is fixing his nets,—what are temples to him?—his wife is tying her shoe. One lady is locking her maid up that she may not have too good a time while the mistress is ashore. Ali, the waiter, stands counting his tips with which he has announced that he will buy another wife when he returns to Assouan. He is but twenty-three and has two already. Well to the front of the ship, with these fantastic mountains, the sacred river, and that gorgeous temple before him, P—— is calmly reading the *Spectator*. The sight is too much for my composure, I double up with laughter and make personal remarks to him. He merely gazes at me a moment over the rim of his glasses and continues,—reading the *Spectator*. I may anticipate here and say that throughout all our days in many lands he would always upon such occasions,—read the *Spectator*; until finally the appearance of that journal in his hands always caused us to look abroad for some object of interest.

Abû-Simbel is a spot to be visited with congenial spirits only. Therefore we have waited until even our little crowd is on its return to the boat.



From a photograph by Sebah, Nubia  
Abou-Simbel—Interior



Seated upon thrones and towering nearly seventy feet above us, how immense the colossi appear, how insignificant ourselves! The prospect they gaze out upon is save for our boat barren of all signs of human life,—just the river, and beyond the mountains of the desert stretching off and away to the eastward. There is no sound but the wind and a soft hush, hush and murmur which puzzles one at first, but is discovered to come from the ever-moving sand descending from the cliff above which seems determined here to put an end to the hours of Abû-Simbel. It has buried the temple before and would do so again but for the hand and power of man.

But to return. The English naturalist, who is of great repute at Oxford, has spent his time rushing over the steamer and clapping pill boxes over innocent looking insects. Yesterday he came back with quite a large bright green and most wise looking chameleon, which has since been slowly starving upon a beam overhead, and from which it tumbles with a flop every now and then to the hard deck. When we remonstrate at the apparently cruel treatment, the naturalist shrugs his shoulders and says "it does n't matter as the thing will live until we reach Khartoum anyway." My decision to liberate the poor creature is instantly taken and I think as instantly suspected by the wife of the naturalist who keeps a furtive eye on me every time the boat stops, but I bide my time.

At Abû-Simbel, those two most worthy people having gone ashore with the crowd, I wait, and, bagging the chameleon, make for the bushes. I shall always insist that said chameleon winked at me as I opened the bag. His funny old face wrinkled all over and he gave utterance to a silent Ha! Ha! as with great deliberation he stepped forth and was free. Did he scurry away? Not a bit of it, but sat gravely regarding me as I departed, with an expression which plainly said, "Thanks awfully, old chap, but I would not be you when Madam finds I am gone. However, you meant well, so, ta ta," and that was the last I saw of his emerald greenness, and I soon forgot him and all else in the presence of the majestic temple towering above me.

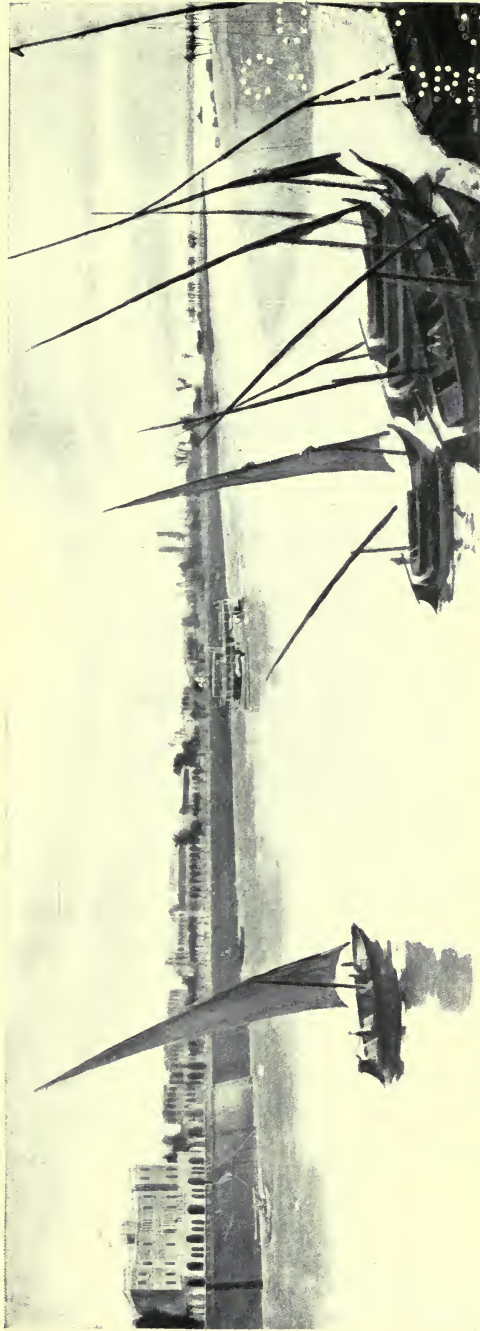
Abû-Simbel, meaning "Father of the ear of corn," was built by Rameses II., called the Great, more than thirteen hundred years before Christ. The features of the colossi are as clear-cut as though the sculptor had but yesterday dropped his chisel. Yet as I stand before them, my thoughts are not of their beauty and grandeur but of the endless panorama which has passed before them! Small wonder if even stone faces become weary with the watches.

Miss Edwards speaks of one of the faces being whitened but there is no trace of that now. All are of the colour of the mountains, a soft, dull gold, and the expression of tranquillity I have never seen equalled in any other figures on the globe.

The temple is cut out of the solid rock and but for falling and rolling fragments from the mountain above would stand unimpaired. Nature has spread an altar cloth of vivid green before it and draperies of vivid yellow sand flow down from the mountains on either side, while above bends the fathomless deep blue sky of Ethiopia. As our boat this morning glided slowly past, the sitting figures almost appeared to lean forward and regard us, but as we see them nearer they are looking far off across the river to the eastern mountains and to the past, or perhaps to the future. Their faces are far more human than any other in the land, for in general the Egyptian carvings are not human, but these sitting here in close companionship throughout the ages are indeed very human, and as the changing lights and shadows play upon them, almost soften into speech. What would they tell us if the seal of silence were removed, I wonder. With the exception of the Sphinx there is nothing so impressive in all the land. How life-like those hands appear resting so lightly on the knees. How solemn, how reposeful it all is. The curtain of sand to the right, falling from above the temple, appears almost to have been drawn aside purposely to reveal the marvel of Africa. If you have never seen those sands of Africa, no description will make you appreciate what they are. Here they swirl downward from the cliff, a brilliant orange in colour and fine enough to be used in an hour-glass. In attempting to

reach the entrance to the temple one sinks to the knees and arriving, well out of breath, stands amazed. Straight into the mountain, themselves carved out of it where they stand, are two rows of gigantic figures, the grandest caryatids that the world holds. With arms crossed on their bosoms they face each other, two by two, and show the way to the sanctuary. What profanation to enter here as a tourist! What an outrage that guide! One regrets the days of Ismail Pasha when natives could be murdered at will. Certainly the will to do so is with us and we retire until he has completed his round with the others and departed. Then, in the solemn silence and hush which has reigned here for so many millenniums we feast our souls with Abû-Simbel. Pausing an instant in the entrance one gazes inward and, far off, confronting one, sit four dusky figures. Instantly to the mind come the old tales of enchantment so dear to our childhood, and for a moment we hesitate to enter. Perhaps the mountain may close on us, who knows? However, if you would obtain the full effect of the temple you will pass inward to where they sit. One is the great god Ra (the sun), gazing outward towards the living sun, and if you are fortunate to be here when the latter, rising over the yellow mountains, shines full in the face of the former you will never forget it. Ra sits in the holy of holies, two hundred feet back in the mountain, and with him are Khem (or Egypt), Osiris, and





By special permission of the Soudan Development and Exploration Company, Ltd.

“Where the White Nile Meets the Blue”

A General View of Khartoum





Isis, and for thirty-three centuries they have sat here always in the darkness save once a day when the sun shines full in yonder doorway, turning all the temple into gold, or each month when the full moon covers all with silver.

Exploring the temple outward we find that it is composed of several chambers, the most imposing of which is the entrance hall with its double row of gigantic Osiride figures supporting the roof some twenty-five feet above us. The columns which back them as well as the walls and ceilings of the entire temple are covered closely with illustrations and hieroglyphics of historical subjects.

Was the knowledge of the history of Egypt so absolutely necessary to these latter times that it was ordained that it be so marvellously preserved to us? Aside from all the authorities and writers from those inspired downward we have from here to the sea on every temple and obelisk, deeply carved in enduring stone or painted in colours which are as distinct to-day as when laid on, the entire record most wonderfully told. The outside barbarians with all their desire to destroy have done but comparatively little towards their destruction. The great temples of Dendera, Edfu, Esna, Philæ, and Abû-Simbel stand absolutely perfect, while Karnak, Medinet Habu, Abydos, Kôm Ombo, and many others, are gigantic in their ruins and every bit of stone in each and all is covered with an item of history so that the

story of this land is for four thousand years and more confirmed to us without the shadow of a doubt. How different that of Europe. That which was written for us a century ago is vastly changed by many historians of to-day. Was Lucrezia Borgia good or bad, did the Maid of Orleans die at the stake or live to bring up a family, was Henry VII. all good or did he force history to be written to suit himself, thereby causing Richard III. to be coloured very black when many believe him otherwise, and,—what was the fair Queen of Scots? If she had lived in Egypt we would have found a *cartouche* or so which would have settled the question (there is no doubt about Cleopatra). All this is most vividly impressed upon the beholder here in Abû-Simbel, where the walls are rich with records, and then, as we gaze outward across the glittering river and yellow desert and into the eternal skies, we wonder “wherefore were we born, for evil or for good?” Threescore years and ten and we are gone,—where? If you have retained the belief taught you at your mother’s knees you may answer that question, but never otherwise.

Here on these walls we are again and so strongly impressed with man’s struggle against the inevitable forgetfulness of time, against oblivion. Rameses II., called the great, has put his seal and name on everything, not only here, but wherever he could, all down the river to the sea, not only on the temples and obelisks, but upon nearly

every papyrus roll in the land. He was not great in anything, save perhaps in this, but he succeeded, for no one who comes this way will forget him. A sort of Louis XIV., he resembled the French King in his building and in the length of his reign, which was but four years shorter than that of the Grand Monarque,—sixty-seven years. There were many kings far more illustrious, but he blew his own trumpet to great effect, and is called “the great” in consequence.

There are some monarchs and rulers of to-day who are trying the same thing. We shall not live to know the result, but this we do know, that to cause their names to be remembered for four thousand years there is nothing they would not do to the nations over which they rule or have ruled or no vengeance or punishment too great to be visited upon those who after that lapse of time should write after their names as is done after that of this King—“no title to be called *Great.*”<sup>1</sup>

All this—or something like it—will doubtless cross the mind of the thinking man as he gazes upon these solemn old gods here in the heart of the mountains, but turning, the change is like that from death into life for it is deathly still and dark here by the gods. The vision roams down the shadowy corridor, past the gigantic guardians standing with folded arms and solemn faces, and

<sup>1</sup> Some rulers of to-day would grant him that title in that he had twenty-three sons and seven daughters.

leaping through the square of the portal is off and away into the brilliant sunshine like a soul let loose. How the river glitters! How the mountains glow! How deeply blue the sky! Everything is not dead after all. Here in the darkness there are mutterings and movings and the swish of wings; only bats, but one has a very eerie feeling until so assured and glances over one's shoulder to see if these four gods are not engaged in some sort of necromancy.

Passing outward we pause a moment to inspect the efforts of another vandal to make his name immortal, "Psammetichus." Though one must deplore the scribbling and carving of names and dates on these monuments, yet now and then they impress one greatly with the flight of time. It was a strange sensation to read high up at Karnak the names of some of Napoleon's soldiers, who had come up there sight-seeing like ourselves, but how much more so here at Abû, where one finds this inscription of some soldiers, passers-by like ourselves, of the date of 594 B.C. or more than one hundred and thirty years before Herodotus visited Egypt. They regarded Abû, seven hundred years old then, as we do the castles of England. They entered Thebes when at the apex of its power, saw Karnak in its perfect state, and passed many a boat of the dead on the sacred river, and the story is as interesting as that of the ruler of the land. Stationed at Elephantine to protect the country from the Ethiopians and



From a photograph by the Author  
The Gordon Statue, Khartoum



having been there years without being relieved, they passed over to the enemy, pursued by Psammetichus. He endeavoured to persuade them to return to their country, their gods and their families, but without avail. They were given lands by the Ethiopian King and settled in his country, thereby in time producing great effect upon the civilisation of the land. They were called "Automoles," which being translated means "deserters." They were also called "Asmach," or those who stood on the left hand of the throne, and there were 240,000 of them. This inscription was carved by the soldiers sent in pursuit, showing that men in those days were not greatly different from those of centuries later.

Somewhat exhausted with our inspection we return to tea on the boat and I am no sooner happy and comfortable than an awful voice demands, "Did you steal my chameleon?" I can't understand why I am always suspected of such things, but it's useless in this case to surmise or deny and I am forced to listen to what she thinks of my crime against science. However, she can't re-capture the chameleon as she does n't know the tree, and we tell her she will be abducted if she goes ashore after dark, which is not altogether an idle threat.

It is well to remember that it is but a few years since all about here was at war with the whites and that nothing but the fear of the whites keeps matters dormant now.



Some few years since two foreigners left their boat for a stroll after dinner and—never came back. So to-night when two of the maids belonging to passengers on this boat started out to visit the German boat just in and but a few hundred yards below us, the captain sent a guard after them in post haste. He said it would be dangerous to visit yonder temple not one eighth of a mile away unless we went in a party, but as the moonlight is not strong to-night it is not worth the walk.

## CHAPTER II

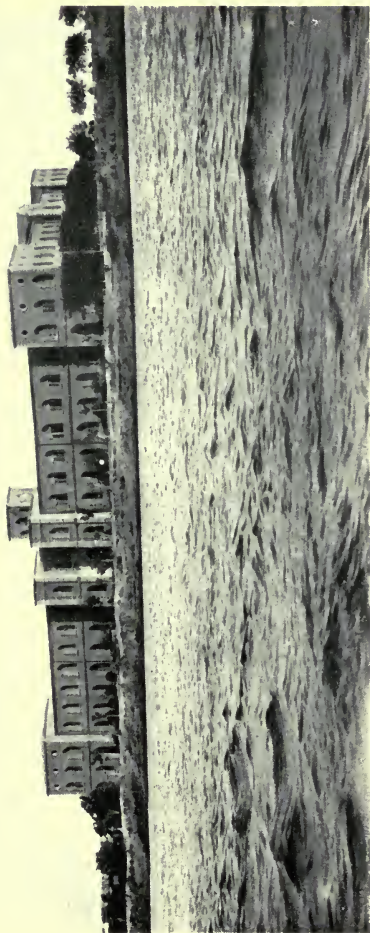
Entrance to the Sudan—Wady-Halfa—British Occupation—Departure for Khartoum—The Train—The Journey—Atbara River Junction—First Notice of Gordon—The Relief Expedition—Mr. Gladstone—Present Day Interest in that Period—Abû-Hâmed—Merawi—The Worth of this Land—Arrival at Khartoum—Panorama of the City—First Impressions.

DAY is just breaking as our boat moves up the river. Some thirty miles south I am greeted with the call, "Good morning, master, we are in the Sudan." Abdallah's black face gleams with pleasure as he announces our advent to that land of sadness, horror, and both lingering and sudden death. It is green and smiling along the river on this cool morning. Even the yellow sands beyond sparkle as though in happiness and the *sakiyas* creak with joy as they raise the life-giving element and distribute it over the land where without it all would be dead and buried shortly. Native crafts on this river change but little as the millenniums roll by. Yonder boat is the same shape as those of the twelfth dynasty. You may find its counterpart painted on the walls of the tombs. So the people dress now as they did then. Their houses are of the same form and

materials, always of mud. Even in the days of her glory Egypt boasted but few houses of other material, and to-day we find at Medinet-Habû and the Remeseum the remains of the only stone palace in all the land. Naturally the rise of the river washed away all which it touched that were not of stone, and as it was no labour to build, a reconstruction took place between the yearly floods. Otherwise, those mud palaces might have stood for ages. This is the case in Central Asia, where all the cities are built of mud; even the great mosque in Bokhara and the Madrassies of Samarkand are of mud faced in tiles.

It is stated that to all intents and purposes the Sudan is a British colony. One is tempted to ask if Egypt is not such also. Let us hope so. However, in the Sudan, all the higher officials are English. The Governor-General is a British officer, the Sirdar of the Egyptian army is nominated by the Khedive on the recommendation of the British government, and cannot be removed without its consent. Egypt pays the cost of the army and makes good the deficit in the cost of administration. England pays the interest on the Sudan loan. The people, impoverished by the long years of the Mahdist tyranny, are not heavily taxed, hence there is and will be a deficit for some years.

If one would shoot, a license for a year must be obtained, also one for shooting which varies according to the size of the game, and there is an



From a photograph by Miss Helen Parmelee  
View of the Gordon Memorial College from the River



especial fee for each animal shot, while giraffe, rhinoceros, eland, zebra, and onager are strictly preserved.

Don't come to Nubia with the idea that you will be always hot; this morning it is so cool as we move up the river below Wady-Halfa that I am driven into the cabin though it is nearly eleven A.M., bright, fresh, and cool as an early June morning at home.

Wady-Halfa spreads along the eastern banks of the river, a pretty panorama of varied coloured houses, blue, yellow, and pink, embowered in acacia trees, with a minaret piercing the blue sky. A few boats are moored by the bank, amongst them Lord Roberts's dahabeah *Cheops* awaiting his return from Khartoum.

Here we find the British and Egyptian flags floating side by side. The former does not appear in Egypt, but one is well aware of its close proximity, with all which that means. Yonder is a Sudanese soldier, black as night, like a huge baboon and uniformed in yellow khaki and bright scarlet,—while just behind him crawls along a poor cripple distorted out of all shape by the brutal Khalifa or his men. Yet, knowing that such things would certainly happen again were the English rule to depart, these people would welcome the change, I doubt not.

Just here the river is twice as wide as at Cairo. The Nile has not lost its lake-like appearance since we left Assouan. Halfa is not the busy

place it once was as the opening of the railway to Port Sudan has deflected much of the Khartoum trade in that direction.

The air from over the river blows cool and fresh while that from over the desert comes like blasts from a furnace as we wind through the streets of Halfa towards the station. The train de luxe which goes twice a week on the arrival of the steamers is long and low like those in India and for some reason best known to the porters all the berths are made up, though it is but three o'clock in the afternoon. However, a "make-up" here consists of only a sheet and pillow; the former is promptly rolled up and tucked away and the latter is in constant use. There is the usual mix-up,—one car is reserved for Kamel Pasha and suite, and when I express surprise that camels have suites, even in Egypt, the conductor tears his hair as he ejaculates, "No sir, no sir, not *camel* but Kamel Pasha." I don't see the difference and threaten to demand my money back and have him arrested for forcing us to ride in a stock train. "But *sir*, I assure you he is not a camel with humps but a very nice high gentleman." All the time the gentleman in question calmly regards us from the grandeur of his "assured position" in that car.

How hot it is! I fear we are in for a fearful twenty-four hours of dust and heat. Each compartment holds an electric fan and we have a dining-car. Miss P——'s maid discovers that the

ladies' dressing-room holds but two towels and promptly proceeds to steal one for her mistress and one from the other room for us men. This we have marked in the middle, or with the wisdom of Solomon we may cut it in two. While the question is under discussion the train moves and it is with something of a thrill that we realise that we are off for Khartoum.

The road leaves the Nile, with all that that name means in this desolate land, and plunges at once into the heart of the desert. As far as the eye can see nothing is to be discovered but brilliant yellow sand, hot and sizzling, over which the air quivers and dances as though in anticipation of the torment to which it will shortly subject us. However, having twice crossed the black sand desert of Central Asia, I do not dread this greatly.

How simple it seems to blow a whistle and start out over these rails, few remembering what it cost in lives and money to build this road or what its building meant to this land, for the first step forward towards the avenging of Gordon came with the laying of those rails we have just passed over.

As the train starts the conductor passes through and distributes all sorts of Sudanese literature, during the perusal of which we forget all about the desolation and heat outside, and when we do remember it the heat is not there, at least so far as we are concerned. A cool strong wind blows



through the windows and the electric fans keep the air all through the train in motion. Along the road on either side are fences and barriers to keep off the drifting sand, which moves as easily and lightly as snow at home.

The night ride is, on the whole, much more comfortable than I had anticipated. While the berths were hard, the dust was not nearly as bad as we had feared, from the statements of other travellers, that it would be. This probably results from the fact that these trains do not move fast enough to produce much dust and the fans drive out what does enter.

Berber, so famous in the late war, was passed at daylight, and Âtbara, the junction for Port Sudan, was reached at eight A.M. There we waited an hour, though why, it would be difficult to state as no other trains arrived or departed; also it was not that they might clean out the carriages, as they made no effort to do that.

Here we cross the Atbara River, the first tributary of the Nile, and we do so on the bridge built by the American firm against all other competitors both as to time and cost. Since two A.M., when we reached Abû-Hâmed, the railway has run along the east banks of the Nile, which we shall not again lose sight of, though we are at no point near enough to see it or be benefited by its cooling influence, if it has any in this hot land.

Atbara Junction is not now a military post,



By kind permission of Captain Amery  
The Sons of the Mahdi and Khalifa

THE  
LIBRARY OF THE  
MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY  
AND  
ZOOLOGY  
OF THE  
CITY OF BOSTON  
1887

but is an important point, as the shops and sheds of the company are here. I have just heard some Englishmen call it "a very good post." Well, perhaps so, when compared with some others, but as I stand on the platform the prospect is not enchanting. On either side the desert sands stretch away in a dead level, covered with a desolate grey brush, like our sage. The skeletons of numerous camels which have long since found their lives not worth the living do not enliven the scene greatly, though some pretty gazelles skipping off and away give indication that life may exist out there. Only along the river is there any point where human life would be possible.

Lord Cromer states that if England had sent soldiers at once to the relief of Gordon they would have had to be Indian or Egyptian, no white man could endure the awful march between Obok and Berber save in winter. After Ariah there is no water. General Gordon stated that "it is quite impossible to keep British troops there in summer."

"The only worry I have is that you will dawdle away your time and do nothing until too late. If you would only put your pride in your pocket and get by good pay three thousand Turkish infantry and one thousand Turkish cavalry the affair, including the crushing of the Mahdi, would be accomplished in four months."

The question, "How many years of suffering and horror, how much money and bloodshed,

would have been saved had his advice been followed?" is yet heard on all sides in this land. He dwelt again and again upon this the last resort for preventing the triumph of the Mahdi.

When Gordon issued his formal Proclamation at Berber and Khartoum he was opposed to such a move, but, times had changed,—it was now necessary and he knew it. He was told, "General Gordon cannot too clearly understand that these operations cannot receive the sanction of Her Majesty's Government, and that they are beyond the scope of his mission." In other words, he was meddling and presuming. Still, Lord Cromer thinks

"As a choice of evils it was preferable in the interests of England, of Egypt, of the civilised world in general, and of the people of the Sudan that the Mahdi should obtain possession of the country rather than that it should be handed over to the Sultan. Dervish rule was an evil but it could be foreseen that it would be temporary and could be confined to the Sudan. A Turkish occupation covering all Egypt would have been an evil of a more permanent nature and was almost irreconcilable with the idea of a future Egyptian reconquest."

There is much in that statement. Even the casual observer can imagine what a permanent Turkish rule in Egypt would mean to *all the world*. It makes but little difference in Turkey itself, as that country is—as it were—off in a corner, but

Egypt is on a great highway of the world necessary to all nations.

General Gordon did not at first appear to remember that these people were far different from the Chinese. There he had a nation which had been semi-civilised for centuries, here he had to deal with wild beasts, fresh from the deserts and rabid for blood. As an organiser General Gordon was all that could be desired, in time of peace he would have made a good Sirdar, doubtless, but in war, another stamp of man was needed, such as Kitchener. The very fact that he did not restore that breach in the wall shows that he had but slender hope of succour from the north. Khartoum did not fall by treachery (the man so accused was one of the first to fall at the hands of the entering Arabs) but by the "incapacity or stupidity of Downing Street." It has been said that the late Mr. Gladstone never saw any of the adverse criticism in the press of himself or his work, that Mrs. Gladstone was most particular as to that. If so, was she not to blame for many of his wrong moves, for how are we to know we are wrong if we read only that we are right, if we never know what our critics say of us? Do we not learn more from an honest critic than from our friends who simply flatter and thereby destroy?

Evidently, the late Premier never believed that he had made a mistake in the Sudan, for if the above is correct he was never told that the

outer world thought so, though he certainly heard it plainly stated in the House of Commons. However, if he had that work to do over, would he not do just as he did do in 1884, having learned nothing by his former blunders or experience, call it what you will? It is rarely that recent history holds much interest for us—we are generally very tired of it in a short space of time, but the contrary holds in the Sudan. The events of the past ten years are so constantly to the fore that one finds oneself discussing them at any and all times. On the train, on the platform or boat a word will suffice and one is shortly in the midst of those scenes and times, living them over again and again—but let us drop the subject now and return to the present.

At Abû-Hâmed I noticed a line which stretched away westward and wondered where it could reach to in that direction. Its termination is not many miles off at the Fourth Cataract at the foot of which is Merawi, the ancient capital of the Ethiopian queens of the Candace dynasty.

Watching the unrolling of the panorama of central Africa the question constantly comes to the mind: "In itself, is this land worth anything to any nation?" My old friend, Leigh Hunt, will say yes, but I noticed he departed as soon as he could. Colonel Stewart in a letter to the Earl Cromer, before the fall of Khartoum, states,

"The best of these towns, Khartoum, is but a collection of mud huts, which, if destroyed to-day, could



The Mahdi's Tomb the Morning after the  
Battle of September 2, 1898





be rebuilt to-morrow. This country is only intended by nature for nomad tribes and a few Arabs by the Nile. It annoys one greatly to see the blood and treasure wasted on it."

As a link in the chain from Cape Town to East Africa, it certainly would not do for England to allow any other nation to hold the Sudan, but for that reason alone. At least, so it would appear to the traveller here to-day. Those few gazelles are the only sign of life which has greeted our eyes, though the phantoms of the mirage have peopled every mile of the route.

The afternoon shadows lengthen and the sun loses somewhat of its fierce directness and awful heat. One might live out there now with care; but how this ride takes it out of one! How smothered in sand and heat one feels, and how delicious blow the winds from the Blue Nile and down out of Abyssinia!

At last our train rolls into a large station with arched top. Hotel porters meet us and confiscate everything, so that I carry nothing but my cane as I stroll out onto a high terrace above the river, and behold the first sight of the famous city of Khartoum.

The Blue Nile rolls at our feet, broad and blue and delicious, and how delicious you will never realise until after such a day's ride. On the opposite bank amidst a waving ocean of acacia trees rise the towers and roofs of the city, while far to the right, across the White Nile, one catches a glimpse

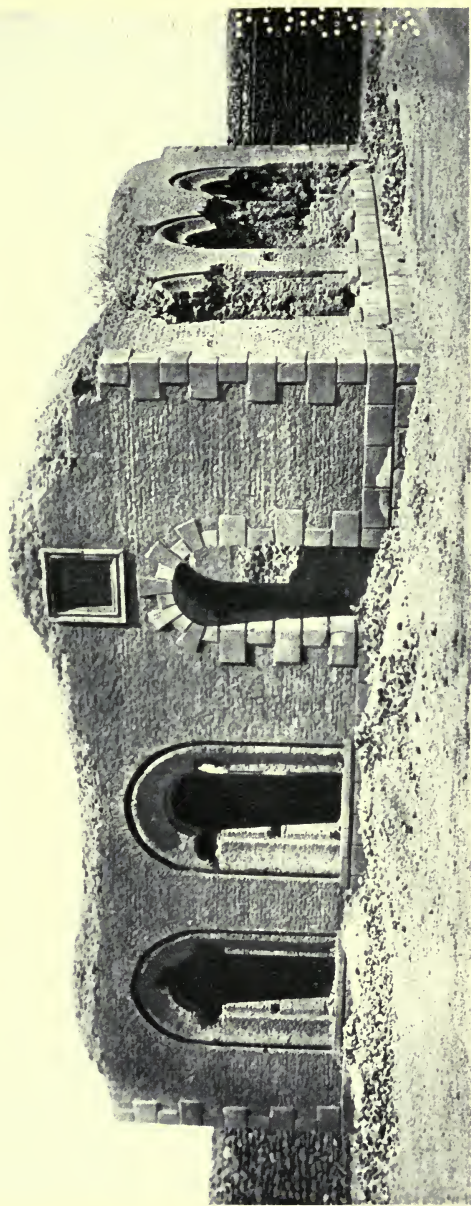
of the grim Arab town of Omdurman, whose grisly horrors are of such recent date, and which is so peaceful now. Far beyond it, and in fact, beyond and around everything, rolls the desert, crimson under the afterglow, like a vast congealed ocean, only waiting the word of command to wake into motion and overwhelm all living things hereabouts, returning the world to its primeval state. It is claimed that twelve thousand years ago there was no Nile and that to-day it would not be difficult just north of here to turn the river into the Red Sea at Port Sudan, that not much of a ditch is needed, and the waters would speedily do the rest. Imagine the fate of Egypt if that occurred. What a horror of desolation one would find all down that green enchanting valley!

The ferry from the station passes the front of the city for quite a mile to the hotel. To the left up the Blue Nile is the railway's bridge to the city proper, as yet incomplected. Near it, rises the tower of the Gordon Memorial College, then long lines of villas embowered in tropical trees. The palace where Gordon died fills the centre of the picture and is succeeded by more villas in extensive compounds. The native town lies back of all this, and one catches a glimpse, as the ferry moves along, of the tower of the mosque built by the English. It is well after sunset when we reach the Grand Hotel and find comfortable rooms and baths awaiting us. As we enter we are greeted by some roaring lions in a neighbouring

garden,—not that I would have you think that lions are exactly domestic here and take the place of dogs, but in cages. But the animal which impresses his existence upon one most insistently is the everlasting donkey, here called “the brass band of Khartoum.” If one of them lifts up his voice in prayer or praise, every other donkey anywhere near and anywhere far joins in the chorus and shortly, from the Arab town south, from North Khartoum, from grisly Omdurman on the west, wails forth the music, and I doubt not that it is passed from donkey to donkey all down the Nile to Alexandria and across the isthmus to Arabia, through the Holy Land, over the mountains of Lebanon past Ararat and on into Persia until the entire Orient is in discord. I think that there is a donkey in our compound which acts as leader, as he generally starts the racket—there he goes now. Is it joy or sorrow, a lament over fallen state, or indigestion? Does he remember and regret his high place in that flight into Egypt? Some day we shall understand. In the meantime, we listen in sympathy during the day and are roused in terror from sleep. To-night I am brought half awake out on to the veranda by an outburst, only to find all the world asleep, while the Southern Cross sparkles in the dark blue heavens before me, and turning northward, I can just discern the Great Dipper as it vanishes below the horizon. One begins to feel far from home when one can no longer see Ursa

Major,—when strange constellations sparkle overhead one is lost.

How profound the peace and repose of the city to-night! I feel tempted to mount yonder white camel asleep under a mimosa tree and so wander off into the town, anywhere, everywhere, and I could do so in safety, where but a few years ago my life would not have been worth purchase, might cross the river, and all alone, save for the camel and the moon, enter the very house of the Khalifa to be greeted with, "Have a whiskey and soda, old man." All the grisly horrors of ten years are over and done with, at least while England stays here, and I know of no more profoundly peaceful scene than this spread out below me in the moonlight to-night.



From a photograph by the Author

The Mahdi's Tomb as it is To-day



## CHAPTER III

Climate of Khartoum—Our Hotel—History of the City—  
Advancing Civilisation—First Walk through the City—  
Greek Traders—Khartoum's Brass Band—Panorama  
of the Niles—First Glimpse of Slatin Pasha.

THE morning air has almost a tang of the north as I come out on the veranda en route to my bath. This climate at this season is far better than the same latitude in India; while there is often coolness in the air there, there is never the same degree of life in it. I draw my robe around me and shuffle along at a lively rate, passing numerous bedrooms whose doors and windows stand wide open to the air—and showing their occupants deep in slumber. Servants must be honest hereabouts, nothing is ever locked up.

The waters of the blue Nile are curled into little waves by the wind and even the limitless desert appears a pleasant spot just now, while the air is so clear that one can distinctly see the town of Omdurman and beyond it the place where the battle was fought.

In the compound below me a gaily caparisoned white camel is grunting and groaning as it rises and stalks away with our landlord, a comfortable



German enthroned on high for his morning ride. Strange birds are squawking in the neighbouring compound and now and then the roar of a lion livens things up a bit.

After a comfortable breakfast we are off for our first inspection of this famous city. It is difficult to believe that less than ten years ago it was all in ruins, yet those who know the effect of the heat in summer together with the sand-storms realise that it would promptly return to a ruinous state if left to itself and without the assistance of the war.

Khartoum means elephant's trunk, that long strip of land between the Niles yonder being that shape.

The foundation of Khartoum occurred in 1821 and was the result of a tragedy which occurred at Shendi; when Mohammed Ali's son and General Ishmail Pasha were attending a feast at the palace after his raid up the White Nile, he was, with his Egyptian officers, burnt to death, the palace having been set on fire by the treacherous Sultan of Nubia, his host.

Mohammed Ali sent a new army which destroyed Shendi, drove the Sultan—Nime—into Abyssinia, annexed Kordofan, and founded Khartoum which succeeded Shendi as the capital of Upper Nubia.

We passed through Shendi about noon yesterday, but I have no recollection what it looked like, though it is said to have a large population, all

native, I suppose. To-day it is an important camp.

Just across the river are the wells of Abû-Klea where the last battle but one in the vain attempt to save Gordon was fought. Colonel Burnaby, who wrote *The Ride to Khiva*, was killed there. General Stewart advanced from there to Gubat on the river and fought again. Shendi was then bombarded and Metemma taken, and from there Sir Charles Wilson sailed for Khartoum, only to find all had ended there *just two days* before. That boat is now at Khartoum.

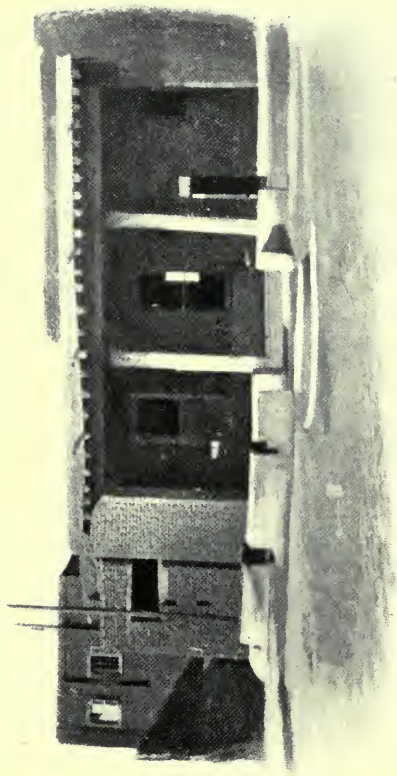
Khartoum is twelve hundred and forty feet above the sea and in winter has a delightful climate, far superior to Cairo. Its population was forty thousand before the siege and is some thirty thousand at the present time.

It is now laid out on an imposing plan and holds some stately buildings, notably the Gordon College, the Palace, and the Mosque. Wide avenues lead away from the esplanade on the river and are intersected by others of equal width.

There is a steam tram which runs to the ferry for Omdurman, usually crowded with natives who grin at you in the most friendly fashion, just as they would have cut your throat, also in a friendly fashion, ten years ago.

"In no other part of the world has so great a change taken place during the last fifteen years as in the Sudan.

"Fifteen years ago Omdurman was the capital of one of the most barbarous tyrannies that the world has ever known; the town was an overcrowded mass of hovels, with disease and distress rampant; now is its modern representative, Khartoum, the centre of a rapidly advancing civilisation. It possesses, in the Gordon Memorial College, an educational institution of which any city might be proud, and it has an organisation for scientific research which is hardly surpassed in the extent of its work and the zeal of its workers by any country in the world, and this research laboratory has just issued its third report. Khartoum is no ancient city; eighty years ago there may have been a few fishermen's huts on the site but nothing more. In 1821 or thereabouts Mohammed Ali doubtless chose that situation, low-lying alluvial soil though it may be, because it is placed on the tongue of land lying between the Blue Nile and the White Nile at their junction, and so it was defended on two sides by the rivers. It is little above the level of the rivers between which it lies. It would have been difficult to discover a more unsuitable site for the founding of a city, but here Mohammed Ali established a fortified camp, and from that beginning a town grew up. We hear from time to time of the increasing size of Khartoum; by 1850 the population had reached some 30,000. There was a large garrison, 10,000 infantry and 2000 cavalry; but the streets were narrow and tortuous, though here and there a space resembling a square could be found. After rain the streets were impassable, and no one attempted to go out of his house until the sandy soil had absorbed the rain. Sir Samuel Baker visited the



From a photograph by the Author  
The Khalifa's House, Omdurman



city in 1862, and he describes it as a miserable, filthy, and unhealthy spot. The houses were chiefly built of unburnt brick, and every house was overcrowded. There was an utter absence of drainage, and epidemics were common. The town improved a little, and by 1880 large Government buildings and a good hospital had been finished. Many good private houses and large shops were built, but all this was swept away by the Mahdi and the Khalifa, and Omdurman was built lower down on the left hand of the Nile. Khartoum City is still seated on the peninsula between the Blue and White Niles, that is to say, on the southern bank of the Blue Nile; the low alluvial ground is still liable to be flooded whenever the river is specially high. The northern bank of the Blue Nile is markedly higher ground, and on this bank it was wisely resolved to place the new city, or Khartoum North, as it is called. Here are the railway station, the barracks, and also a large native settlement."<sup>1</sup>

But to return to our inspection.

We pass the Coptic Church, a stately structure next this hotel, and just beyond enter the compound of Col. Asser to call and present a letter. The grounds are beautiful, full of stately trees and flowering shrubs, while the house, a commodious structure of two stories surrounded by wide double verandas, is completely covered by a vine resembling our woodbine.

<sup>1</sup>Third Report of the Wellcome Research Laboratory at the Gordon Memorial College, Khartoum. By Andrew Balfour, M.D., B.Sc., F.R.C.P. Edin., D.P.H., Cantab. Director. Balliere, Tindall, and Cox.

Col. Asser is off on inspection, but we are greeted pleasantly by his wife, who proves to be an American. Unfortunately that was the last time we met her as an attack of illness housed her for the rest of our visit.

A few days later in the cool hours we take tea at the house, or rather out on the lawn, which is covered with luxuriant grass. The latter grows better and is of a better quality than any in Egypt. The trees, thirty feet high, were planted only a few years ago. We are fortunate in meeting Col. Asser, a handsome man in the prime of life, who does not look as though he had seen much hard service, but I discover quite accidentally that he was at the battle of Omdurman and has been in the Sudan ever since. He married an American, which undoubtedly accounts for his endurance. (No conceit about this is there?) But to return.

Passing onward we are shortly in front of the Palace of the Sirdar, and entering its court are almost at once upon the spot where Gordon fell. To-day it is a bower of beautiful trees and gurgling fountains. Away from its rear entrance stretches a wide avenue, and in the near distance rises a stately monument to the man who waited and watched and died just here. He is mounted on a camel and faces outward towards the desert, and it is said that long after the unveiling, native women gathered around it, convinced that it was "the good Pasha," come back to them once

more. But the sad face gave no sign of life, and finally they turned away weeping bitterly; but let us pass onward leaving the sad subject of his death until we have seen the city where his last struggle took place.

The traders of this land are the Greeks,—one sees them squatting in all the cafés and under the arcades like black beetles which it would be a pleasure to crush, for their cunning, servile faces are full of evil and dishonesty. They do not seem to be of any nation or race, and it made little difference to them whether Mahdi or Gordon governed here,—they appeared to come and go as they liked, much like the mongrel dogs of the land. Slatin speaks of them in Omdurman under the Khalifa and I doubt not one would find them in any section of darkest Africa,—certainly they are a most unpleasant looking lot, not unlike the Eurasians of India. To-day in moving around and through the stores of Khartoum, of which there are plenty of good ones, we never left or entered one of them that some of these Greeks did not peer into our faces with a most evil expression. I should not care to meet them in a lonely section either in the night or day.

The heat is always great here in the middle of the day and though this is January we scurry across the great square to the shelter of the arcades and there pause to look around a bit.

The square is spacious and surrounded with good business blocks, wide avenues stretch away



on all sides until lost in the desert. Towards the Palace a park has been started which it will be difficult to maintain save in winter—the fiery blast of summer will surely return the soil to its desert conditions unless an abundance of water is at hand.

As I wait a moment in the door of one of the shops, my eyes rove off down one of the avenues to the circle from which rises the statue of Gordon already referred to and even now some native women stand before it with grave upturned questioning faces,—he was their friend and they do not forget.

The government allows no one to interfere with the religion of these people, in fact, it is building a splendid mosque, quite the equal of that of Sultan Hassan in Cairo, and to-day no infidel is allowed to enter these holy places.

The business portion of Khartoum, lying back from the river, is laid off in very wide streets, and there are some very good buildings containing stores, where about all one may desire can be purchased; but how hot it is away from the river! The wind seems to die away as if by magic when you go a block inland and the heat will drive you to cover promptly if you have been indiscreet enough to come out in midday.

The residents here claim that the climate of Omdurman is much to be preferred to that of Khartoum, that it is not so muggy. Certainly I felt nothing muggy in the delicious air which



The Battle-field, Omdurman



swept our veranda and rooms high over the Blue Nile and the glittering atmosphere of Omdurman tired my eyes and made my head ache. Yet Khartoum away from the river presents a very lonely appearance. It holds none of the sociably narrow streets or shadowy bazars of the ordinary Oriental town. Its wide streets and low houses appear to grow tired of each other and lapse into the desert. The houses of the Europeans all face the Blue Nile, forming a long esplanade with the Palace in the centre.

Beyond it they continue for a mile or more, ending in a great structure of red brick, the Gordon Memorial College, which we enter to call upon Captain Archibald.

As it is afternoon when we do this there is no one about in all the vast structure, so selecting a room which looks like an office, we shove cards and letter under the door and depart, trusting to luck and the existence of a considerate "Bridget" who will not sweep them into the dust heap.

We learn later that every one has gone to polo,—natives and all,—and we meet the lot as we return homeward.

One does not do very much each day in these hot lands and we have done enough for to-day, so returning to the upper veranda have tea amongst the tree-tops, first having ordered the Khartoum brass band, *i. e.*, donkeys, tethered in the court to be removed as distantly as possible. I wonder if that big donkey recognises a kindred

soul in my humble self. Certainly I never appear that he does not lift his voice in greeting or lamentation as the case may be. If it's a compliment, on the order of "God save the King" I do not appreciate it, having but one set of drums to my ears.

I shall never forget the prospect spread out from our balcony in this hotel. Up amongst the tops of the waving acacias we feel like Peter Pan. The river bank is high and the blue water rolls placidly below us, dotted with curious craft and many graceful lateen sails. A green plain stretches off before us and far away the united waters of the two rivers take their course to the sea, while on the horizon the yellow deserts stretch away on either hand and in the centre one flat-topped mountain marks the site of the famous battle-field. Against the crimson glow of evening some vultures are slowly floating, and the whole is so still. Truly the rush and roar of our world has no place in Khartoum.

From this porch of ours we look northward down the Nile, and can see coming round the farthest bend the smoke of a steamboat. The scene is exactly the same over which Gordon's weary eyes wandered all those long months, except that I see what he so longed to see,—that puff of black smoke, which to him and the poor people under him would have meant salvation, rescue, life, meant an escape from that awful death for him and torture for those under him.

One boatload, giving heart to the people, and showing that he knew what he stated when he said "they will come" would have saved the day; but it took long to dine and consider in Downing Street, and so Gordon died. Two days after, two boats came round yonder bend in the river, but finding the flag down, knew that they were too late and sailed away again, and darkness for fourteen years settled over the Sudan, reducing it from a populous, prosperous country to a desert almost unpeopled.

Night falls suddenly in the tropics and the stars are twinkling as though day had never been as we descend to dinner. In advance of the others I wait in the hallway, the only other occupant being a little man with bright eyes and brown moustaches—a stocky man with a strong German accent, Sir Rudolph Von Slatin Pasha, one time donkey boy for the late Khalifa, and upon whom it is said his master forced, with a gleaming smile on his devilish face, some of the worst old hags in Omdurman as wives and saw to it that it was not a marriage in name only. "You are a disciple of the prophet now and must act as such. Live the life or you die." Of course with the triumph of the British Slatin forgot all that, and does not like to have it remembered by others, but the dragoman to Omdurman will show you where the ladies lived. The natives hold this man in high contempt as one who has fore-sworn himself and hence should not be honoured

as either Christian or Mohammedan. They used to spit at him for having foresworn his own faith and now will not look at him at all. Of course they dare not now spit upon or at him. It is reported that Lord Kitchener has no use for him, holding that he can be of no service here with the natives who do not respect him, but the late Queen thought otherwise and would have it so, and therefore on a large board in front of his residence one reads that he is "Inspector General of the Sudan." And as for medals he wears more than any other man in Khartoum. At dinner lately at the Palace, Lord Roberts wore but two, but Slatin opposite was simply covered with them, and I am told that many times people have had to wait an hour and a half while he arranged them in place and rank.<sup>1</sup> Still one forgives all that to one who has lived twelve years a slave to the tyrant of yonder grisly horror of a town. Certainly by his life there and his book thereon he has made himself famous if not immortal.

<sup>1</sup> I believe that a regulation compels all officers to wear their decorations.





From a photograph by Watson Pasha

After um Debreikat. Showing the Body of the Khalifa in the Background





## CHAPTER IV

Omdurman and the Way thither—The Junction of the Rivers—Discovery of their Source—Breakfast with Major Haskard—The Prison of the Khalifa—The Mahdi's Tomb, his Life and Death and Burial—Slatin Pasha in Omdurman, his Life and Escape—Father Ohrwalder—House of the Khalifa—His Relations to Slatin Pasha—Gossip of the Bazars—Cannibalism—Torture—An English Missionary—People of the Sudan—Slave Market—Battle of Omdurman—Opposing Forces—Picturesque Attack of the Arabs—Flight of the Khalifa—His Death—Slatin Pasha Sees him again.

CAN anything be more desolate than a high wind and bright sunshine? If it is cold and dark the wind seems a natural part of the day, but when the sun blazes downward over all the world and the wind moans and shrieks like lost souls, the depression, to me at least, is almost unbearable. There is always in winter a high wind at Khartoum, and as day breaks to-day it moans and sobs over river and desert with intensifying sadness.

We are bound for Omdurman and early morning finds us en route down the banks of the Blue Nile to a point almost at its junction with the White, and where we shall take the ferry for the famous city of the Mahdi. We move along by jerks

or smoothly as it pleases the donkeys which draw our rickshaws. Men here can be forced to do that work, but comply most unwillingly and with no satisfaction to those who ride. The donkeys appear to be of the same frame of mind, as they certainly object and rarely can be driven by the lines. A boy must walk by their heads or a bolt or a sit down—generally the latter—would ensue every minute or so. To-day the beast drawing Miss P——’s rickshaw manages to separate itself from the vehicle and turning around gravely regards her with a “What are *you* going to do about it?” expression, all the time rousing the echoes and the neighbouring lions in the Zoo by its loud-mouthed protests at the indignity being thrust upon it. Reaching the landing stage we find our boy with the saddles awaiting us and a snub-nosed ferry-boat shortly puffs up to the pier.

From here one has the junction of the rivers spread out before one and can plainly discern the line, extending out of sight to the northward, where the clear waters of the Blue reach the muddy currents of the White Nile. The main river stretches away to the northward, broad and calm, and in the delta formed just here is the island of Tuti, flooded during high water times. Behind us the White Nile spreads off towards the equator, lake-like and placid, being some four miles in width not far to the southward.

A recent writer in speaking of the literary

treasures of Europe stated that the ancestral castles of the old nobility of Europe are far from having yielded up to the students of history, science, and art, all their hidden treasures. The libraries, the muniment rooms, the vaults, and the garrets of many of them remain virtually unexplored to this day, perfect mines of information with regard to the past. Not long ago the librarian of the Prince of Waldburg discovered in the library of the prince's château of Wolfegg, the Carta Marina of America, dated 1516, in which the name of the explorer Americus (Vespucci) was used for the first time to designate this great continent, and also the Waldseemüller map, dated 1507, and delineating with amazing accuracy the great lakes that constitute the sources of the Nile, and which, according to all modern geographies, encyclopedias, and other standard contemporary works of reference, were first discovered a little less than half a century ago by the explorers Speke, Grant, and Sir Samuel Baker.

The discovery of this particular map showed that the sources of the Nile were perfectly well known at the time of the discovery of America, and that in some strange way the knowledge had become lost to the geographers and scientists of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and the source had to be discovered afresh in the nineteenth century. But, to return.

As we leave Khartoum we notice near the land-

ing some low mud fortifications. Through that break just there, which we have passed so unconcernedly, the Arabs poured on that fatal morning. It would not appear that those walls could ever have formed much of a barrier unless very strongly manned, though of course ten years of storm and sun have obliterated much of them.

Here the level desert stretches off on all sides and yonder on the left bank of the river lies the long, low straggling city of which the world has heard so much and for which so much blood has been shed, Omdurman, the city of the Mahdi and Khalifa, the capital of a vanquished nation and declining faith. Its low mud wall spreads northward for a distance of ten miles, and beyond, just on the horizon, one can discern almost the only hill hereabouts, and which overlooks the famous battle-field where the Crescent received the most severe defeat and setback since the days of Charles Martel, for the siege of Granada was but a following of the French battle, but for which Spain would never have shaken off the Moslem yoke.

Omdurman lies close to the river, whose banks rise gently and are to-day covered by the people's market. Major Haskard, whom I had known in Ireland, meets us here and we go for breakfast to his quarters, a spot made comfortable by the determination of the men who know that the next few years of their lives must be passed here and intend to make those lives as pleasant, or at least



From a photograph by Major Archibald

Victims of the Sleeping Sickness—Uganda. Some of the Author's Patients.

Note how Thin and Wasted they are





as bearable as possible. Of course, it is a mud house,—there is nothing else in Omdurman. Just as a reminder of “home” a garden has been started, which here meant great labour, as there is absolutely no soil which will sustain vegetation and it is therefore brought from the island across the river.

Already a few sickly plants are showing their welcome green above ground, and you who have never had sight and senses blinded and dulled by the eternal yellow glare of the desert and the changeless cloudless skies, blue in the morning, brazen at noon, and crimson at evening, can in no degree appreciate what a joy and relief the slightest bit of green is to one, especially if one comes from the cool grey skies and refreshing greens of Merry England. Yet those cool grey skies would be an equal horror to that Sudanese yonder, who stands calmly regarding us. His skin is black as ebony and shines like it, a skin that requires brazen skies and awful heat to keep it in condition.

An hour is spent in the pleasant shelter of Major Haskard's house before we start to explore the city, to do which I mount the smallest donkey of my long experience. I am almost ashamed to do it. I feel as though I were riding a mouse; but even so at first try my leg does not clear the humped up saddle and I come back to Mother Earth catching as I do the flicker of contempt which passes over the face of my donkey boy.



That spurs me to greater exertion, and I nearly clear the entire lot of donkeys next time.

However, we are shortly en route, too interested to talk. It is rather difficult at first to realise that we are actually moving through the scenes of those horrors of ten short years ago.

We ride off down a long distance of wide yellow streets, bordered by bright, yellow walls and arched by the deep blue sky. Not a sign of life, not even a pariah dog in sight, and an absolute stillness, save for the patter of our donkeys' feet, reigns over and around us. Of the hundred thousand souls which made the town hum with life, but forty-seven thousand remain, and they are banished to another part of the city. This section was occupied by the particular tribes of the Khalifa, who brought them in from the desert and planted them here. It was necessary to disperse what the battle left, in order to the more effectually break their power. They were the worst robbers and murderers of the lot, as their poor fellow-townsmen soon discovered. Now, no longer allowed to do as they like, they are wretchedly poor, though no more so than they deserve.

In the immediate vicinity of our starting point are the prisons of the Mahdi, now but heaps of crumbling yellow walls fast resolving into the dust from which they sprang. There is enough left, however, to show one that prisons were not costly structures in Omdurman,—a high mud wall

enclosing some hundred square feet, and happy the poor wretch who was not forced to herd in the few covered spots or hovels the place might hold. This spot and the whole city reeked with the most awful vileness and terrible stench when Lord Kitchener's men entered after the battle, but winds and sun have long since purified it, while the broken and fast vanishing walls could not now inspire terror in a child.

The Mahdi's tomb is the next object of interest. It was his house, made sacred to his people by his life, death, and burial, and would undoubtedly have been made an object of pilgrimage by them, many of whom still believe in his divine mission. Even to-day we notice several women who flee furtively away at our approach, and Major H. states that, though it is forbidden as much as possible, they will come here to pray and get the grass off of the grave, believing that its charm will cause them to bear children. Three black shadows sped off in the distance as we entered. They know that the Mahdi's body was taken up and thrown into the Nile, an act of Lord Kitchener rendered absolutely necessary to prevent the spot's being made a shrine.

The tomb or house is not a large structure, only some fifty feet square. Nothing remains but four mud walls though once they bore aloft quite a stately dome.

It is claimed that the first Lyddite shell ever fired in war was shot at Omdurman and striking

the dome of this tower blew half away. The believers in the prophet must have lost hope then.

Not until the taking of Khartoum did all his family and followers accept this Mahdi as the true one, and yet from that time onward he proceeded to destroy all that by his life and manner of living, which finally caused his death and the death of his cause. He had four lawful wives and numberless concubines. Thirty women stood round him when he died, waving fans of ostrich plumes. The ground he trod upon was holy and garnered by the women—the water he washed in was consumed as an unfailing remedy of all illness.

After the capture of Khartoum the Mahdi lived for a while in Gordon's palace, but finally removed here and Khartoum was destroyed.

In Omdurman he gave himself up to luxury and voluptuousness, countless women in the harem, scented linens, gold brocaded pillows, made from stolen vestments of the Catholic church, and all so saturated with perfume that when he attended prayers all the vast mosque was redolent therewith. His inner life was that of a voluptuary in every respect, but before the people the character of the prophet was strictly maintained. Daily he preached to them in the great square blistering below in the sunlight. Upwards of seventy thousand men, extended in long rows of one thousand, filled the space and bowed before him like grass before the wind.



Permission of LeKegian Co.

Major-General Sir Rudolf von Slatin Pasha



The place is enclosed by a very good wall, burnt brick, and in those days was shaded by enormous mats held up on forked sticks.

Every man in Omdurman was forced to attend all the daily services, no matter how distant his dwelling or place of business. If he did not do so he was reported by the spies, hauled before the Khalifa, and generally cast into prison, where he might live and rot or die, as it pleased him—just forgotten. By this compulsory attendance at the mosque the whereabouts of every one was known and no greater trust seems to have been placed by the Khalifa in his own people than in the foreigners, of course the latter were more strictly watched, and having to appear three or four times daily there was small opportunity to escape. Slatin Pasha only effected his by informing the Khalifa that he was ill and could not attend for a day or so, commanding his own people not to disturb his repose. When his absence was reported to the Khalifa he replied, "I know, let him alone, he is unwell in his house." But when finally he learned that he was not in the house, it is reported that the Khalifa wept, "Gone, and I trusted him." The hue and cry went out at once over all the land, but Slatin was not recaptured.

It would seem to one who has crossed this blistering desert in a comfortable carriage that death at the hands of the barbarians would have been preferable to that flight of seven hundred

miles to Assouan. Blinding, blistering, withering heat by day and bitter cold and howling winds by night, little to eat and less to drink, dreading every human being, all the river patrolled to capture him. Surely it must have been a wreck of a man who crawled into Assouan. Life is our dearest possession. We may have faith in one in a better world, but we possess this one, and it is but natural to hold on until the last gasp. Slatin is far from his last gasp as yet. Vide, those "twenty wives." Or was that the reason he fled away into the wilderness where, in all events, he could chant to his satisfaction that beautiful hymn, "Peace, perfect peace"?

The officers out here enjoy poking fun at Slatin Pasha, who certainly takes it in good part. Every now and then a woman turns up in Khartoum with a card stating that "This woman says she knows Slatin and may be his wife. We think it well to send her on to have a look at him." Slatin rages and repudiates and the woman is returned with a line to the effect that "Slatin denies ever having seen her before so she cannot be one of his wives." As the woman is generally of an age which would make her a child when he was in captivity, the joke is self evident. This happens every now and then with the only result that it causes the little man to dance with rage. "You ruin my reputation." He speaks with a strong accent.

After Slatin's flight the Khalifa ordered his



wives, servants, land, and cattle to be taken possession of but ordered that the household be treated gently as being the property of a true Moslem. ‘‘Slatin’s Darfurian wife, Hassanieh, whom he married when Governor-General of Darfur (showing that it was not a captor that forced him to take a native wife), was claimed as of royal blood and married at once to one of the Darfurian royal family. Desta, his Abyssinian wife, died of fright as the result of the ransacking of the house and her reduction to the position of a common slave. She gave birth to a boy who survived her but a few weeks.’’<sup>1</sup>

On the whole, from an Arab’s point of view, yonder Sir Rudolph does not appear to have had a very bad time, though to a European the best of lives in such a place as Omdurman must have been torture. But to return to the Mahdi.

When the time came for prayers all his gorgeousness was laid aside, and clad in humble stuff, anything but clean, he marched off, prayed and preached, then returned to the delights of the harem. As the result of his life he grew very fat and died on June 2, 1885, of fatty degeneration of the heart, surviving his victim Gordon but a few months. It is claimed also that he was poisoned by a woman whose people he had murdered in Khartoum, and whom he had outraged. Be that as it may, he was dead and few will add ‘‘God rest

<sup>1</sup> Neufeld’s *A Prisoner of the Khalifa*.



his soul," and yet he was far preferable to the Khalifa.

The people were told that he was about to travel through heaven for the space of three years; no one was allowed to say that he was dead. As all Mohammedans must be buried coffinless in the earth—the Koran commands it—his body was wrapped in a shroud and laid in the earth itself.

Before the grave was filled up the corpse was sprinkled with perfumes by the women, then each person present threw in a handful of earth, exclaiming, "O merciful, O gracious God."

So died and was buried the false prophet of the nineteenth century, one of the many who have "come in My name."

Behind him were tens of thousands of murdered human beings and countless devastated towns and ruined farms. Poverty, famine, and death reigned on all sides,—in a country once prosperous, now desolate, and to be made more desolate, to undergo still greater horrors through the hands of his successor. The Khalifa Abdallah promptly put to death all other claimants to power and all the relatives of his late master upon whom he could lay his hands, and the numbers were not few.

Throughout all the provinces stretching from Bahr-el Ghazel to Egypt and from Darfur to the Red Sea, the Mahdi's mission had been to destroy all existing forms of government, and this he had done most effectively.



Permission of London Stereoscopic Company  
General Gordon



Khartoum, the former beautiful metropolis of the Sudan, was but a heap of crumbling bricks. Gordon was slain, Hicks Pasha and Stewart and Burnaby and thousands of the helpless all gone under these terrible sands, their day of life and life's dream done.

Father Ohrwalder states that Gordon's head was hung on a tree in Omdurman and remained there for the birds to pick at and the people to revile. There is to-day no sign of a tree in all the stretch of that city. One reads with absorbing interest his most thrilling account of his *Ten Years' Captivity*. That is its title, and as you scan the book-stalls you will probably see it, but the outside of the book gives him no credit whatever. You would fancy the work to be one of Major Wingate's, Ohrwalder's name not appearing there at all. Of course it does on the title-page, and full credit is given him in the preface.

It was written in German and translated into English by Yusif Effendi Cudzi, a Syrian, after which Major Wingate arranged it in narrative form. But it would have been better to have the real writer's name on the outer cover. Looking for that, I passed the book over several times, thinking it Major Wingate's work as I knew he had written one.

The good father graphically depicts the sudden collapse of Mahdism with the death of that prophet. The people stood around as though stunned and would in no wise accept the news.

*He* could not die, he was immortal, but luxury had done its work, and he did die, and a grave was dug on the spot where his bed had stood and therein he was buried and this tomb erected over all. Then his religious claims vanished like the flame of a candle blown by a gusty wind. His successor was only a human and a brutal ruler. The Mahdi was often merciful and benevolent, the latter never other than savage.

A short distance from the tomb stands, quite unchanged, the house of his successor, the Khalifa. It now forms the comfortable quarters of Capt. Asquith,—a young officer upon whom I look with some interest. In most nations, if one were the son of the Prime Minister of the land, one would use influence to get transferred to a more comfortable post than this grisly Sudan, but not so here. It's all in the line of duty and cheerfully accepted, cheerfully lived out, even if it means, as it often does, ten or more of the best years of a man's life, or death without glory at the hands of some black brute.

I think I can truly say, and I have known and met them all over the world, that I have never known an English soldier<sup>1</sup> to object to or complain of his fate. If he feels rebellious, he keeps it to himself.

But I left you standing in the blazing sun at the door of the Khalifa's home. However, do

<sup>1</sup> I believe Mr. Asquith is in the *Civil* Service—but the comment holds there also.—M. M. S.

not grumble, I take you in there much sooner than you would have entered twelve years ago. Then you would probably have been chained to yonder stake and left in the awful heat and glare, dust and howling sand-storm, to live or die as the case might be, and did you complain you would have been flogged or mutilated, probably both. But now, come in out of the sun, leaving the latter to your donkey, who points his ears at your disappearing figure, as though to ask that *you* do not in turn keep *him* there.

You enter a small mud court and then more of the same sort at odd angles to each other, like a rabbit's warren. After passing several such you come to one of greater pretensions—but not large,—and in the days of the Khalifa this is as far as you would ever have gotten. Here in an eastern alcove in the morning and a western alcove in the evening he administered such justice as pleased him. If you did not think it justice that was the fault of your education, not his.

Farther on one finds the other rooms, all moderate in size, grouped around a courtyard, and the only one upon which labour has been expended is the bath-room. This holds a large tub in cement, with hot and cold water taps, stolen from some English boiler; also the iron wash basin let into cement came from some steamboat.

The gratings of the outer windows once did duty as an iron fence in Khartoum, probably from Gordon's palace.

As we pass out onto a rear portico I stop in amazement, for an instant. Has the spirit of the Khalifa returned to this one-time abiding place of his body? It would seem so, for by a post in the sunlight sits a diminutive black figure wrapped in a white burnous. Over the head and around the body the white cloth falls in graceful folds and is held under the chin by a diminutive black hand. A queer little black face is lifted towards us and a pair of piercing black eyes keenly regard us. It is not until I notice the point of a tail behind that I realise that it is monkey and not man. I never saw anything funnier, or burnous more gracefully worn,—it is human to the last touch, and we laugh until her ladyship retires with deeply wounded feelings. I regret that I have not my Kodak,—one never does when it is worth while. Passing upward to the roof of the house, which is but two stories in height, one looks out over the court end of Om-durman. Just below stretches a vast enclosure—already mentioned—the mosque, which is now a parade ground, and there Slatin Pasha says he made some three hundred thousand genuflections. It is stated that the preservation of Slatin's life was due largely to two things, his never-failing good humour and his fine teeth. With the former he amused the tyrant and by the latter he was enabled to masticate everything given him. Yonder is the house where he lived and they say that a Mrs. Slatin, one or more, may still be met with





The Palace from the Gardens. Gordon Fell in the Left-Hand Corner





therein—in fact, I was told to-day that he still sends money to Omdurman. His friends state that he is of the greatest service to the government here, that he is a diplomat to his fingers' ends and that, together with his perfect command of the language, enables him to smooth the pathway of the officials here and throughout all the Sudan.

To the Khalifa he acted as interpreter and as court jester, and rest assured the poor man was made to dance. I doubt if an Anglo-Saxon could have stood it. Imagine twelve long years in this horror, never your own master for a moment, one day high in favour, the next degraded to the post of donkey boy and worse and forced to run at the tail of the Khalifa's horse hour after hour and over mile after mile of yonder blistering desert. If anything went wrong he was held personally responsible, a scapegoat as it were, and all the time he must carry a smiling countenance and use those teeth upon whatever was placed before him, and you who are used to the wholesome fare of the north can in no way comprehend the vile stuff these people can and do eat, and the awful state in which they live, mud hovels baked by the terrible heat or soaked by the tropical rains and alive with vermin and with dung heaps in the very sleeping rooms.

A man built upon large lines could not have done what Slatin did. It would have killed the conqueror Kitchener.

Even now in his prosperity they say that Slatin is for ever in a happy humour, that entering the palace and finding the Sirdar in a grave mood and the household gloomy, he will shortly have the whole place laughing. Surely in his case it has been "laugh and the world laughs with you." To have smiled through twelve years of Omdurman indicates that there is much in the man.

It is reported that he is rather fond of returning to his old life when out in the country, such as riding camels gorgeously caparisoned (himself wearing turbans and white clothes) or sitting on mats under palm trees and eating dates—but he displayed nothing of this to us. He is an Austrian and the Austrians are rather elegant.

His present house, which I did not enter, is full of the most beautiful embroideries, and he entertains delightfully. He certainly attracted me very greatly, notwithstanding those "twenty wives."

The Khalifa was in a way the Baron Haussmann of Omdurman though his motives were far different. Finding that the narrow, crooked streets were not suited to his progress he ordered broad highways cut all through the town, and it was done, with as much ease and as little consideration for the homes destroyed as one has for the grass which falls before a lawn mower. The people moved elsewhere and complained not at all, as that would have insured mutilation or prompt imprisonment at least, probably in irons. As

the whole town was built of mud the task was easy. No one had a good house, that would have indicated wealth and insured persecution.

The Khalifa knew the perniciousness of gossip and would, had he dared, have suppressed that hot-bed thereof, the market. But he dared not, and the gossip went on. You will find that more fully than anywhere else on earth an Oriental market proves the saying "There is nothing hidden which shall not be made known." Every item and incident of each other's lives, their dearest hopes and most hidden secrets are known and talked of. Let a man commit murder and he can be tracked by this gossip from Khartoum to Samarkand, and Morocco to Cape Town. The vastest deserts, the highest mountains are no barrier. This happened when I was in Central Asia when a man, who had committed murder in Leh, was tracked all over that vast country, across the gigantic Himalayas, over the Pamirs, over the Black Sand Desert to Bokhara and back to Kashmir and so to Samarkand where he was caught and hanged. I am of the impression that those donkeys are the worst gossips of the land and what they don't know the camels do—and reticence is not a characteristic of either. But to return.

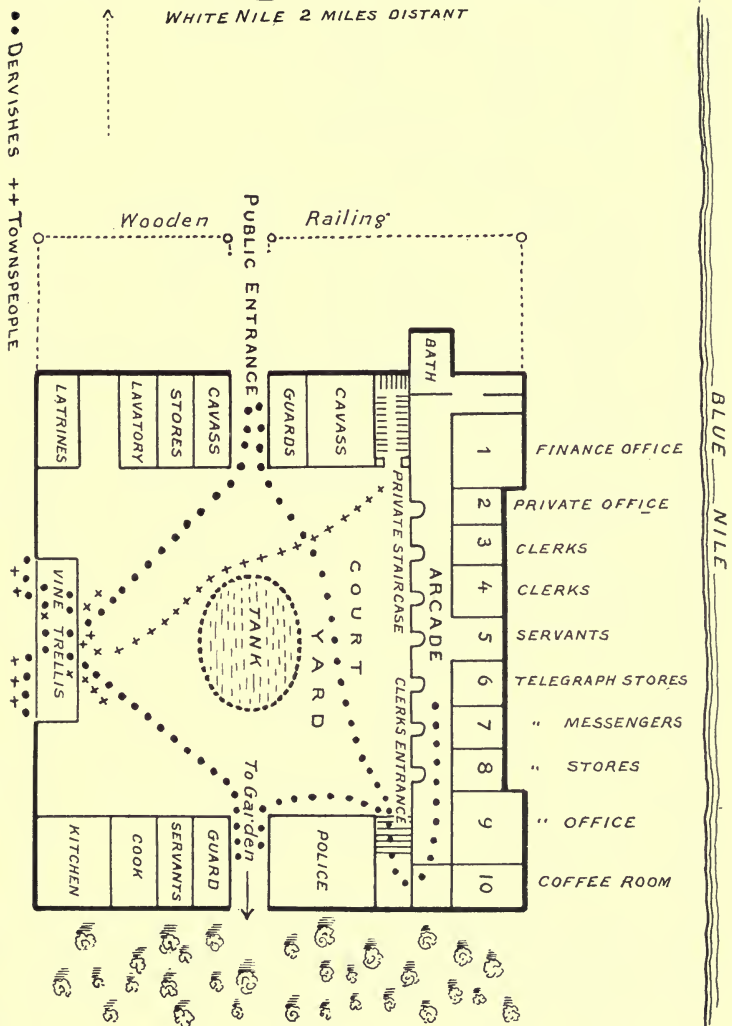
Matters came to such a pass under the Khalifa that cannibalism was a common occurrence. Children never dared venture out alone and even mothers were known to eat their offspring. One

little girl came and asked protection, stating that her brother had been eaten and she would go next and by her own mother. People starved by the thousands and Father Ohrwalder states that he has often seen poor little skeletons of infants trying to get nourishment from their dead mothers' breasts.

We are served daily at the hotel with delicious fish from the Nile, and as the years since Omdurman are now many, we may eat in peace, but then the river was the great burial place and fish to be avoided. Around many of the villages the hyenas were known to enter the huts and drag off the half dead people.

Such were some of the blessings which followed in the footsteps of the prophet and the slowness of Downing Street. No matter what horrors these people had inflicted upon others, they suffered tenfold themselves, until all the land was reduced to a howling wilderness, to remain so until Kitchener appeared, but it will be a century and more before a recovery can be effected.

The mode of torture most delighted in by the Khalifa and which approached nearest to the perfection acquired by the Holy Inquisitor was that of cutting off a hand and a foot from the same man. The member to be amputated was tightly bound just above where the cut was to be made. The executioner was, through frequent practice, an expert in his work,—a few moments only were required. Then to prevent loss of blood the bind-



Plan of the Palace



ings were retained, while mortification and gangrene were prevented by dipping the member at once into boiling oil or fat, and then smearing it with Katran (a mixture of tar and grease). Two months effected a cure, and the man or woman was ready for the only business left him in this world, begging.

I saw a few such in Persia; one especially followed me through the streets of Resht, and having received alms once, rushed round a booth and headed me off on the other side with renewed demands. He was not humble about it, bless you, no. Having performed his part, he allowed no backwardness upon my part in doing mine. He had to be driven off finally with staves and retired cursing me and all my living and dead relations from the days of Noah down and to come.

However, that torture as I have stated almost equalled that of the Spaniards or the delicate attention the refined and religious Puritans bestowed upon the poor wretches they deemed witches, with the single difference that this was done by ignorant savages, that by the followers of the loving Jesus, by people who claimed to be refined and upright and most religious. So runs the world away.

It is related that one Zogheir, the best professional thief in Omdurman, survived the torture and went about nothing abashed or discouraged, on a donkey, still plying his trade. He was



imprisoned for two years and loaded with chains, but considering it beneath him to use crutches, hopped along on one foot, and out once more, he soon regained his reputation as the best of thieves.

Be it said to the Mahdi's credit that he was utterly opposed to the horrible immorality which held full sway under the Khalifa, when matters became so bad that even he endeavoured to effect a better state of affairs, with but small degree of success. One and only one execution of a woman for infidelity occurred during his reign. The poor creature with her last child tied to her bosom was lowered into a grave and stoned to death.

The Khalifa knew nothing of the famous "Ling Chi" or death of a thousand pieces. If in his heaven he does meet some of those gentle old smiling Chinese, wise, versed in these high arts, how he must regret his lost opportunities, and how he must long to return and what a dance he would give yonder gay Sir Rudolph !

I wonder what religion Slatin professes now. For a Catholic and an Austrian to have changed his faith to Mohammedanism for any cause whatever would some years ago in his own land have insured him far greater tortures than the Khalifa ever knew anything about. One can easily fancy what the Grand Inquisitor would have done with him. The Khalifa knew but few of those fine arts. He had no racks or water torture, he did not roast before a slow fire, enclose in an "iron Virgin," nor has one ever heard of his

having buried any one alive even in the name of Mohammed. True, torture was not unknown to him, such as impaling and horrible starvation, but most of his victims were soon blessed with death. On the whole Torquemada would have looked upon him with great contempt and as quite amateurish.

Slatin Pasha was put in irons once or twice, was forced to run barefooted in the hot sun after the swift Arab horse of his master, was forced to adore the prophet five times a day, but all the time the Khalifa assured him that he loved him. Certainly his fate was heavenly when compared to many prisoners in Omdurman. At no time was he in danger of the tortures which would have befallen him had he been captured by our American Indians or the Chinese of to-day. They, the latter, may dig a hole in your side and sweetening the end of a hollow rod insert it in the wound and after binding you leave you to be devoured alive by ants.

The next Khalifa should be educated in China, then he would know how to properly fill his station. Apparently Slatin Pasha stands to-day nothing the worse for his experience, though Capt. A. told me last night that he thought it was beginning to tell upon him. Let us hope not.

On the ferry-boat going over we met a sad-eyed little Englishwoman, who turned out to be a schoolmistress in Omdurman. She was deeply

interested in her work and made us promise to call on her. So, on leaving the Khalifa's house, we did so and found her housed in a small building surrounding a courtyard, where, with one assistant, she was doing her best for these people, and I doubt not that when her name is called on the great day she will not have been found wanting.

You who live in your comfortable homes in a delightful climate, do you think you can in any degree appreciate such a life? The mud house, the blinding dust, the awful heat and scorching sun, the absolute isolation and exile from all her kind, the dead loneliness when the day's work is done, and this, from day to day, month to month, year to year, until God gives her death as the greatest and only blessing which can come to her, and all for a dozen or so little black girls? Would you do it? Think of it the next time you kneel in your beautiful church and thank God you are not as others are.

This little woman kept a smiling face as she waved us adieu, but ah! I knew there was an aching, empty heart back of it. If such men and women do not win Paradise, then the rest of us have not a shadow of a chance.

It is blazing hot as we leave her house and after a hard canter through the deserted streets reach Major Haskard's quarters where we rest until it is time to go to the ferry. As we enter the compound and he is photographing us, my donkey



Where Gordon Fell  
(The Old Palace, Khartoum)



actually sits down under me, leaving me standing like a Colossus of Rhodes. Evidently the little beast considered that his most effective pose.

For three days we have been in the midst of a howling wind storm. Near the river one does not suffer from the sand, but to be out in the desert must be great discomfort, to say the least. The whole sky to-day is grey with the sand clouds, through which the sunlight comes as on a misty November morning at home, but as the snub-nosed ferry has left the Khartoum landing stage we must go down to meet it.

So bidding our host farewell, we are off with much protest on the part of my donkey. As we pass the market he is quite convinced that that should be our destination, and prepares to try the sitting act once more, but a sharp whack of my stick changes his mind and he trots steadily forward, his ears pointed directly in front in inquiry as to where we may be going.

Crowds of Sudanese flock off to the ferry, faces black as charcoal, and yet *not* the negro face,—a better, clearer cast of countenance and much more intelligent in expression. It is said that these Sudanese have a keen sense of the ridiculous, and from what I noticed I should think it true. The women are all dressed in white and wear a lot of jewelry. Yonder is one with heavy silver rings of quaint design, one of which holds a large turquoise. One notices many of these precious stones here—they are evidently the favourite with

these coal black beauties or are plentiful and cheap.

The population of the Sudan is divided into three great classes: the pure Arab, to whom manual labour has been unknown since his ancestor Ishmael mixed the mortar with which to cement the stones of the Kaaba or House of God which Abraham built at Mecca; second, the Negroid, who will work but little and who possesses all the bad and but few of the good qualities of his progenitors; and third, the Black, indolent and too lazy to work, without ambition, and satisfied if he has enough to eat,—clothing and shelter matter not in this climate. His black skin protects him from heat which would kill a white man. The Dinkos have a curious custom of standing on one leg and resting the other by placing the foot against the knee of the straight leg; a spear helps to support them in this strange position. This attitude owes, probably, its origin to inhabiting a country where it is often impossible to rest in a sitting or lying position. The establishment of the Wellcome Laboratory at Khartoum was an act of immense benefit not only to the Sudan, but to all tropical countries. Under the able direction of Dr. Balfour it has accomplished much good work and it will in future do much more. The advent of the British race has benefited many foreign countries, but nowhere probably is the benefit more marked than in the Sudan.



The sight of this swarming population reminds one that Khartoum was the principal slave mart in Africa where trade was always brisk, and Zobheir Pasha, one of the greatest traders, knew these people as no one else did, and was the only man who could have checked the advance of the Mahdi, hence General Gordon's desire to use him, though he of all men could not but detest the fellow. Still it is sometimes necessary to do apparent evil that good may come, and much might have been saved had this man been utilised. He could have been managed once the Mahdi's power was broken and his progress checked.

Napoleon would have ordered it done, Gladstone was afraid, a sensation which the "Little Corporal" never knew. But how simple a matter, after it is too late, it is to suggest what might have been done. What a pity that it was not ordained that our foresight should equal our memory. Imagine the world under those conditions.

As our ferry crosses the placid river the battlefield of Omdurman is plainly visible. It is but five miles away and that is nothing to the eyesight in this wonderful air.

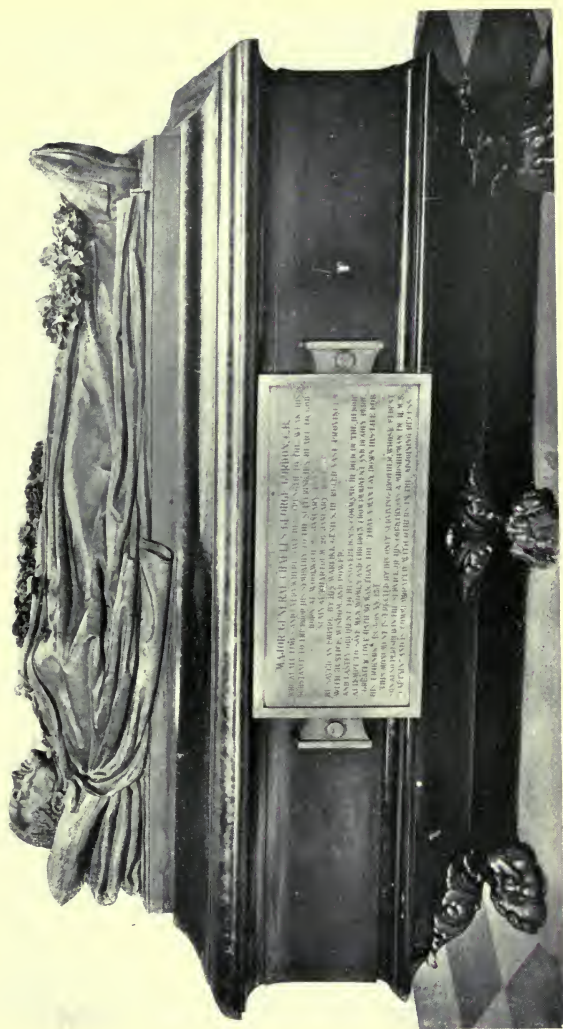
Lord Kitchener possessed the ability of taking pains. It was his perfect preparation for the care of his men, especially in the commissary department, together with modern artillery which won the battle so easily. There were twenty-two thousand British and Egyptians on the one side and forty thousand to fifty thousand Arabs on the



other, the former armed with Maxims and rifles, the latter with nothing save the poorest of old rifles, rotten, home-made cartridges, and spears, all of which were of little or no use. It was a long-distance battle for the most part, but for those who could look on, what a magnificent sight those lines of dusky warriors bearing the black and green flags must have presented as they hopelessly but nothing daunted swept forward to certain death. Line after line melted away like mist before the sun, only to be followed by other lines to a like fate until eleven thousand were killed, sixteen thousand wounded, and four thousand made prisoners, out of forty thousand in all. Think of it. As was said in the Crimea when the Light Brigade made that famous charge, "It was magnificent, but it was not war." Of English and Egyptians killed there were twenty-three officers and three hundred and sixty-three men.

That army was also supported by gunboats on the river and on the opposite bank there was a battery of 40-pr. siege guns and the Thirty-seventh British Howitzer Battery, and all were very effective. There was nothing left to chance; the loss of that battle would have meant the loss of Egypt with who can say how much more, and would have set history and progress back for centuries.

That black horde was the largest army ever hurled into the Sudan by the Crescent against the Cross, and the triumph of the latter has again



From a photograph by J. Valentine

The Monument to General Gordon in St. Paul's, London

1771  
20. 10. 1771

opened all East Africa to commerce and insured peace and quietness.

Truly no adversity appears to shake the faith of these people in their religion. In the midst of the battle the Khalifa dismounted and sitting on his prayer-skin surrounded by his emirs six deep, he held communion with the prophet and the Mahdi, while his army was melting away like shadows before the sun. Later in the day, deserted by all, he squatted alone on his prayer-skin in the deserted mosque, and it was pure accident that General Kitchener and his staff did not find him there absolutely alone. The Sirdar made the circuit of the town all but twelve hundred yards; had he finished he would have come face to face with Abdallah, with none so poor to do him reverence, but the English guard turned away, and the dervish entering his house changed his clothes, collected what was left of his household, and quietly vanished, to appear but once more in history.

Then, a more picturesque sight than even the battle of Omdurman was presented when more than a year later at the battle of Um Debreikat he and his officers spread their sheepskins and sat calmly down to await death surrounded by six hundred who were dead already, including two of his sons and one of the Mahdi's, and here again and for the last time Slatin Pasha stood in the presence of the Khalifa, albeit the latter knew it not.

Neufeld thinks that the only grave error of the Sirdar, Kitchener, was in giving quarter, and that

“in doing so he was aware he was doing a positive injustice to his black troops in order to pander to an ignorant public opinion which he knew existed elsewhere. I know that some people, profoundly ignorant of the Sudan and its tribes, manners, and customs, will hold up their hands in holy horror and jump to the conclusion that very long captivity has engendered a spirit of vindictiveness against my captors which has deadened in me every sense of humanity, and in this they will be wrong. Lord Kitchener made a grave error in extending to a horde of murderers the advantages of civilised warfare and the clemency he felt called upon to extend to them will cost England the loss of many a gallant life yet.

“Everyman in the Black Battalions was entitled to a life in retaliation for the murder of a father, the rape of a mother, wife, daughter, or sister, the mutilation of a brother or son and his own bondage.”

It is indeed a marvel that even the Sirdar could have restrained his troops. As for succouring the wounded dervishes, it was a dangerous and almost fatal work. A wounded dervish only keeps alive until he can send his spear through his would-be saviour and many a poor “Tommy Atkins” was found stabbed to death in the back by the black devil to whom he was giving water. They were wild beasts in every sense of the word and should have been so treated.

## CHAPTER V

Slatin Pasha—An Interesting Talk—Father Ohrwalder and his Life—Fête in the Hotel—Gordon Memorial College—Capt. Archibald—The Tse-tse Fly and Sleeping Sickness—Dr. Seaman's Report—Dum-dum Fever—The Wellcome Laboratory and its Work—Work of England—Pupils at Gordon College—Its Museum—Gordon's Journal—War Drum of the Mahdi—Church in the Palace—Neufeld—Different Versions of Gordon's Death—His Head at Omdurman—The Mahdi's Regret at his Death.

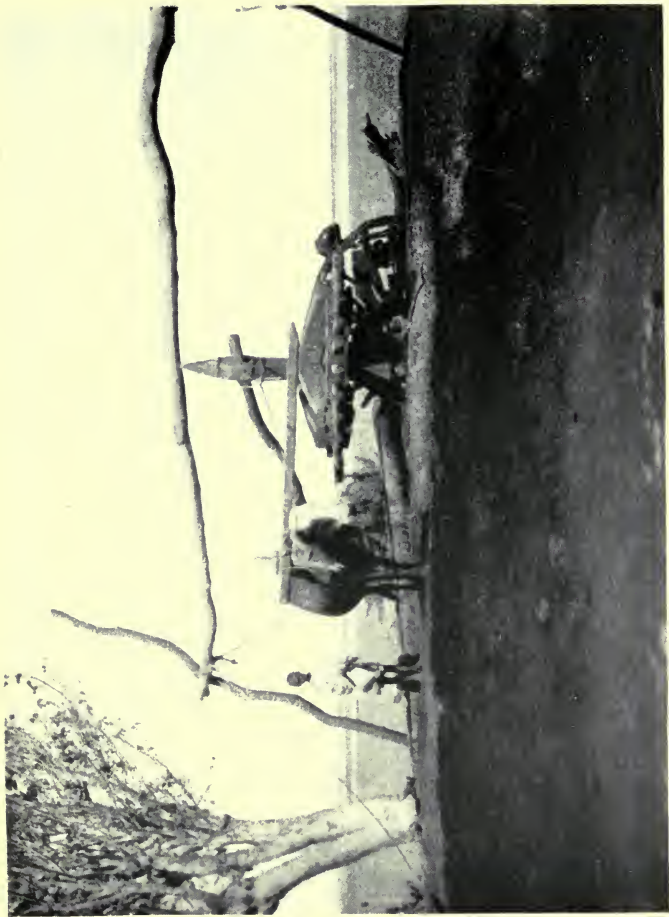
**T** IRED out from our interesting day in Omdurman—mentally and physically tired—we are sitting on the veranda watching the shadows lengthen and wondering what might not come out of them. Are we so safe here even now? Would not these people, though they know they are better off, far happier than under the Khalifa, delight to sound the war drum and swarm down upon us infidels, dealing out to each and all the fate of Gordon? It was but the other day that they did try something of the sort, but it seems peaceful enough here to-night save for the ever tuneful donkey. The air to-day is hot, and dreamy with the musk-like odour of the mimosa, and the river murmurs softly onward on its long

march to the sea; the lights of Omdurman twinkle over yonder and the Great Bear guards us the same as at home.

Some Austrian princes have just arrived and taken the rooms next mine. What a lot of luggage! One man alone has fifty-two pieces. What can they put in them? They don't look like men who care greatly for dress. Slatin Pasha in white flannel is with them. At home we would take him for a goody-goody fellow, just the sort for tennis and afternoon teas. He is very far from being such a man. He smiles and waves his hand at us, and later on comes round to our chairs and sits chatting for a while. He is young looking for his years, fifty-three. His hair and curling mustachio are scarcely touched with grey and his eyes have a merry twinkle. There is absolutely no trace of his captivity unless it be, and I know not—the loss of the third finger on his right hand. While he stays, no mention is made of his captivity, which must have been a great relief to him. He lives in a beautifully appointed bungalow, given him by the Egyptian government, or so I am told. If you paid for it yourself, Sir Rudolph, I pray you pardon me.

I have met Slatin Pasha several times. He is an interesting talker, and I am told has wonderful power over these people when he addresses them. To me he does not appear conceited, and though willing to talk of his unique experience, does it in a most natural manner, as occurred when we met





From a photograph by Miss Helen Parmelee  
A Sakieh at Khartoum





him at Col. Asser's. He does not appear to be a favourite amongst the English here, though I have not been able to discover exactly why. They do say "he is a foreigner." I doubt if he is more so than many of the royal family, and he certainly has less accent. He told me of a meeting lately with some sheiks of a distant tribe, who questioned him as to the justice of the tribute demanded by the government. "Why do you ask it?"

"Why? Why, we are the government, we control you. We must have money to do so and administer justice."

That last amused the stately black immensely.

"Justice. Now, stop. In the old days I could take my men and raid a neighbouring tribe and return, if Allah willed it, with much booty of slaves and ivory, or if Allah turned his face away, I hoped for better favour next time. But you have stopped all that. Why I cannot even quarrel with my own brother; you have the power and that settles it, but don't talk to me of justice."

I asked him if he ever saw the Khalifa alive again, and he answered, "Yes, but only at a distance on the battle-field, but I had a better revenge. I captured all his wives and married them to my own soldiers, and then sent him word. He felt very badly over that."—"Is he really dead?"—"Oh, yes, I saw his body, he's dead fast enough."

Slatin has been regulating Cook's guide here for that statement about his wives. "Why,

he told people I had three wives over there.” —“Three,” I ejaculated, “twenty, you mean.” —“I told him that if he did that again he would leave the Sudan, I would not have my reputation injured in that manner, and now, when he shows my hut over yonder, he says, ‘Slatin did not keep his wives *here*.’”

I think when I mentioned the twenty wives I caught a wink pass between Slatin and Col. Asser.

The other day there passed me in the hallway here a black-robed figure, moving slowly, a man of sorrows, whose countenance attracted and held my gaze, and the memory thereof will linger long when Khartoum has dropped away from me, —Father Ohrwalder, whose book I have referred to.

For ten years he also was a prisoner of the Khalifa, but all the torture of the devil could not cause *him* to forswear his faith. Neither when opportunities to escape were afforded him, would he go until those unfortunate nuns could go with him. He returned here at once and here he has lived and will die. Each year a purse is raised to send him off to the north for a rest and each year he uses the money on his people, never a penny for himself. What will be his reward when he meets his Master face to face? How his life shames all of us!

To-night is fête night in this hotel. All the English world should come here to dinner in

anticipation of which the gardens behind are illuminated and little tables with shaded candles and dainty china scattered around under the trees. The Khartoum band (*not* the donkeys) furnish the music, and a funny looking lot of men they are, taken it would seem right out of some opera bouffe, all Sudanese and consequently black as night, and of a most astonishing lot of assorted sizes. Yonder is one not more than three feet tall and quite as wide, blowing for all he's worth into the biggest trumpet I ever saw. Next him towers to quite seven feet the leader, whom I can compare to nothing save a lead pencil, in a white uniform; that is exactly his shape, to which a tall round white cap adds an additional foot. Soon after they commence to play and we are deeply grateful that all are out of doors.

I don't believe that mortal man, unless he lives here, ever listened before to such a combination of sounds; it was certainly astounding and when the brass band, viz., the donkeys, in the street and the lions in the adjoining gardens all joined in, the effect was certainly remarkable. I doubt if in the wildest moments of the siege Khartoum heard such a bombardment of sounds;—each man and beast seemed searching his soul for sounds to tell how badly he felt.

The hop in the dining-room later was equally remarkable, but I think I had better drop the curtain there, save to mention that the naturalist asked Miss P—— to waltz. Surely if I owe her

a grudge for anything it was paid then. Poor woman, how she was hauled around and banged against things! The professor said he knew how to reverse, my pity for the lady was increased greatly when he tried it. When she suggested that they stop he replied that there was "a time for all things," but did not appear to think that that period had arrived as yet. I may add that the professor was past sixty, heavy set, with lion-like head and mane. He used his feet as though he were stamping off the snow, and to dance with him must have been greatly like dancing with an iron safe. When it ended the lady retired to bed, appearing no more until next day noon. The professor's wife, after getting him his gloves, had promptly disappeared, being wise in her generation.

Thanks to the kindness of Major Fetherstonehaugh, we have come provided with some very good letters to people here, and let me add *par* parenthesis, don't come here without them. One was to Capt. Archibald which we presented the other day and this morning we passed a most interesting hour or so with him in the Gordon College, a large brick building near the railway bridge over the Blue Nile.

The Gordon College is a memorial built by English subscription, one hundred thousand pounds, raised at Lord Kitchener's suggestion, as the most fitting monument to General Gordon.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Something of a contrast to the millions lost in erecting a useless Protestant Cathedral in one of our cities.



From a photograph by P. Dittrich

The Terrace, Shepherd's Hotel





Its aim is the education of native boys in order to fit them for holding posts of responsibility in the future, especially that of schoolmaster. There are nearly two hundred boys and they appear to work with a will, and here again I am impressed with the idea that these Sudanese are a much superior people to the Egyptians. They have clear-cut features and steady eyes. The effect of this college upon the people should and will be most marked.

Capt. Archibald met us at the entrance and we inspected the laboratories, in which he is especially interested.

Here we saw the famous tse-tse fly and the germs of that terrible disease, "sleeping sickness," with which all Central Africa is cursed, and for which, up to the present moment, no antidote or relief has been found save in death alone, and the people still die by millions.

It appears that the fly is harmless unless it has first bitten some one down with the disease, but thereafter it propagates the horror upon every one, white or black, and once bitten, be it ever so slightly, the germ multiplies so appallingly that you are at once past all hope.

Capt. Archibald thinks the only form of relief is to corral every native so inflicted upon an island in a lake and care for them until they die. But would they not have to cover the island with a netting?—or the flies would simply use the poor wretches as a microbe laboratory, and,



flying off to pastures new, keep up the mortality indefinitely.

It is an innocent looking light brown fly, which alights without buzzing and bites instantly, so there is no warning or opportunity to save oneself. If bitten where one could instantly suck out the poison there might be—though it is doubtful—some hope of saving one's life, but delay an instant and nothing remains save an awful fate, slow and horrible.

Under a powerful lens we watched some of the live microbes move amongst the blood corpuscles. They looked black, somewhat like an elongated tadpole with the tail in front, and appeared so near that I started backwards.

It is not known where or from what the sleeping sickness originated. It first appeared in West Africa. The victim first has fever, which may last for ten days, then a respite varying in duration, then the fever again, and each time it stays longer, until it never leaves. A rash appears on the breast and great lassitude ensues. It is almost impossible to rouse the victim, who sits drowsing all day long and does not seem to suffer much pain. He can be roused, but with greatest difficulty, becoming more and more difficult as the weeks and months pass by. He may live several years but is as surely doomed as the leper. As the end approaches he may have spasms, but only as all mortality may have when the great change draws near. Finally when it comes

there is nothing left of what once was a man but a skeleton, over which the skin is drawn tightly and through this the bones often protrude. Imagine tens of thousands dying so. Imagine the silence of a land so affected, where no sound breaks the stillness save the roar of the lion or harsh cry of water birds: think of it,—there is no hope, they must, all who remain, go the same terrible road. Science has discovered nothing so far save the existence of the dread bacilli.

It would appear that the sleeping sickness is contagious and it is imported, that over sixty white men of a European nation have been invalided home with that disease not contracted by the bite of the tse-tse fly.

Science has been diligently at work for a long time upon this subject.

“Slowly it has been shown that the *Glossina palpalis* is the one insect which conveys to man the wriggling trypanosome, which first produces fever, and then, when perhaps years afterwards it finds a way to the spinal marrow, sets up that terrible coma and paralysis which ends in sleepy death.

This venomous fly dwells near watercourses, preferring shade; it will bite any animal with a backbone and its future seems assured, unless all the vertebrate animals of Africa were destroyed in order to deprive it of food. Minchin has suggested the introduction of jungle fowls, which would grub up the larvæ of the fly.

Dr. Koch thought that if the crocodiles on which

the flies feed were exterminated something might be done to check its spread. But a glance at the map of Africa and the recollection of the 1,000,000 square miles over which the tse-tse fly is found show the futility of the suggestion. Meanwhile, sleeping sickness is crawling, nay, flying from west to east across Africa, and when it reaches the Sudan may find its way down the Nile to the white man's countries."

Dr. Seaman says it is depopulating East Africa and on the borders of Lakes Victoria Nyanza and Tanganyika in ten years has killed 400,000 persons.

The fly, whose bite causes the fatal illness, lays no eggs, but the larvæ are reproduced in the bodies of the females and are laid to develop in the decaying vegetation on the shores of a lake or running water. The flies have never been found more than 150 feet from the water's edge. They bite like a horse-fly, with a sharp prick, but Europeans are very much less apt to be bitten than the natives. This, Dr. Seaman said, is because Europeans wear more clothes, and white apparel does not attract the pests, and that the fly, in biting a man already infected with the sleeping sickness and sucking his blood, takes in a parasite known as a *Trypanosoma gambiensis*. This is an eel-like microcosm, which is passed on to another human victim, and, entering his blood, attacks the red corpuscles. No remedy has yet been discovered for the ravages of this pest. At first the patient suffers from irregular,



From a photograph by G. N. Morhig

A Sand Storm Sweeping over Khartoum



intermittent fever. This stage may last from two or three months to as many years. Then the pest attacks the cerebro-spinal fluid. The patient becomes anæmic and drowsy. He refuses food or falls asleep while masticating it. He is exceedingly susceptible to cold, and Dr. Seaman declared that he had known one case in which a sufferer had lain so close to a fire that his arm had been charred without his noticing it. Some cases have been known to survive for eight years from the time of infection, but generally death occurs sooner.

The British Government is fighting the disease by segregating its victims in hospital camps and forcing all villages to be removed two miles from the water fronts. At the college there was also the microbe of the “Dum-dum” fever, so fatally known in India. Then a vial was handed to me which held enough cholera to poison all Europe. I gave it back.

Capt. Archibald has done an immense work in exterminating the mosquitoes here. They are almost unknown, and when I told him I had killed *one* he looked annoyed and said he would have it “looked into.” Every boat which comes down the White Nile is fumigated and oil thrown on the bilge water. Certainly here, far towards the equator and right over the river, we sleep with no bars and feel and hear no mosquitoes.

All nature seems armed against mankind hereabouts. Capt. Archibald loosened from a bottle



two vile-looking enlarged bedbugs, which came from one of the native beds, and whose bite produces fatal disease of the liver and spleen.

· The common house-fly is almost as much an enemy of the human race.

· It is necessary to exterminate noxious insects in order to make the tropics a white man's land; but it is necessary to preserve also the useful insects. Even one of the tse-tse flies may be an ally of man, for it preserves its own spheres of influence from other tse-tses. In the field of agriculture, while the experience of the United States has taught that the boll weevil may do untold damage to the cotton fields we have also learned that the Australian lady-bird may preserve the California orange groves by exterminating the scale insect.

In Khartoum Mr. Henry S. Wellcome established a few years ago a research laboratory, where investigations could be undertaken into the cause of the numerous diseases to which tropical climates are liable, and an enormous amount of good work has been done. Recently the Wellcome Laboratory has been placed under the Department of Education of the Sudan, and the third report, a valuable volume, is the first issued under the authority of the Sudan government. The Director of the laboratory is Dr. Andrew Balfour, and this report supplies unmistakable evidence of his fitness for the post. He has a staff of assistants all well qualified for

the work they have to do, and it is interesting to note, as showing the changes brought about, that the chief native laboratory attendant, who can now be trusted to make excellent blood fibres for microscopic examination, was one of the fighting dervishes in Kordofan, while the man who keeps the museum clean served in the ranks of the Khalifa at the battle of Omdurman. It is impossible to give even a summary of the work recorded in this volume, but a few points may be mentioned. A useful article is that on the construction of houses in the tropics, by Mr. W. H. McLean. Amongst other matters he insists on the importance of shade, for it has only comparatively recently been recognised that sunlight itself in excess is directly harmful to white races. The main use of the pigment in the skin of negroes is to keep out the light rays.

In recent years it has been discovered that no small proportion of the more important tropical diseases are due to microbes brought to man by means of fleas and other insects, and several papers in this report are devoted to this subject. The diseases such as sleeping sickness and Kala-azar are produced in this manner, and a full knowledge of the subject may be of value in the prevention of these maladies. Similar diseases attack the lower animals,—camels, and mules, and even fowls may be affected. An important section is that concerned with Economic Entomology, that is to say, the study of insects which



affect the crops; this is well illustrated by coloured plates. Dr. MacTier Pirrie did much good work in the study of the anthropology of the Sudan, but unfortunately he contracted Kala-azar, from which he died; the anthropological notes collected by him are of immense interest. Of economic importance is the report on the Sudan gums, by Mr. E. S. Edie.

It is for these reasons, among others, that the English entomological committee has been formed. It will, as the first of its duties, collate, examine, and report on noxious insects from all over the Empire, and it will endeavour to collect and relate all the information concerning their habits, their life histories, and the means of effectually holding them in check.

How earnestly the English appear to enter into the work in a far-off land,—all over the globe we find them deeply interested in giving their lives for the benefit of the human race and the advancement of their Empire, an advancement which in this day and date always results in good to the lands they occupy. Look at Egypt, look at this dark land. Where would the former be to-day if England had retired, where would she descend to if England were to retire to-day unless taken over by some other European power like France or Germany? Just where I saw her in 1873,—gorgeous to look upon, Oriental and picturesque, but with no justice or peace for the people, downtrodden and oppressed in every way,



From a photograph by the Author  
The Return of the Sacred Carpet



with no more rights for the masses than for their beasts of burden, with every Pasha and petty official robbing them constantly and to the full, with no hope in the present or future. This Sudan under the fanatic Mahdi and Khalifa was decimated and laid desolate. Even to-day the traveller is constantly horrified by meeting poor wretches whose hands and feet were hewn off during that awful period, and they were left to live or die as the case might be.

To-day here at Gordon College one sees scores of bright-eyed, clean-looking boys, all interested in their work, and through them will come the hope and salvation of the land. We saw there the Mahdi's grandson and the son of the Khalifa, a child picked up on the battle-field at Omdurman, a bright, pleasing fellow. On the whole they seemed a vastly more superior lot of students than the same number in any *black school* in America.

Personally, I do not consider that any good is done our black population by raising them above the working classes. They are inferior minded and will so remain. There may be a few exceptions, but the mass are only fitted for servants and are good for little when raised above that rank.

Perhaps the same would not hold the world over as regards the negroes. Perhaps it arises in our land from their contact with the whites and their generations of slavery. Certainly the Nubians here have an erect carriage and open

cast of countenance unknown to our ex-slaves,—an altogether higher type.

These are splendid specimens of mankind physically. Would they delight in cutting our throats if they could do so, preferring the horrors of the old order of things to the peace, security, and plenty of to-day? Then their lives were not safe a moment, now they know they may walk all the land in absolute security, but, when all's said, we are to them but dogs of Christians.

What a horror would have spread over all the world and this land in particular had the forces of the Khalifa prevailed over yonder on that dusty plain sparkling under the midday's sun. One shudders to contemplate it.

Fortunately the world has, when it needed them, produced its Martels, its Sobieskis, and its Kitcheners. Fortunately they have prevented the Crescent of the infidels from waxing more and more until it, as Mohammed prophesied, became like unto a full moon, pervading and prevailing over all the world. Thank God it is yet a crescent and will never become a full moon, a crescent which will dwindle and dwindle until it fades quite away. At least, let us trust so, for it represents as it stands to-day all that is base and horrible to man.

All this time we have been standing in the Museum of the College where there is much of interest. My hand is resting on the MS. of Gordon's Chinese Journal and yonder is the great

war drum of the Mahdi formed by a section of the trunk of a tree with a skin stretched tightly across it. An uncouth looking instrument but when fully aroused, to do which takes they say half an hour, it possesses a voice which can be heard for twenty miles. As I tap it with my cane I seem to hear afar off a murmur as of the approach of a mighty multitude. I cannot but wonder what would be the effect upon that crowd of Sudanese which I see through the window and of those masses in Omdurman if the voice of this old drum were to pour forth its summons once more. Does the nature of a race ever really change? Would not the slightest show of weakness or hesitation on the part of England produce another Khalifa if not a Mahdi?

Yesterday we went to church in the Palace, which stands on the foundation of the one Gordon used. From my seat I could look down on the spot where he met his death and received his reward, for surely his great reward was given him the instant his soul left its earthly habitation. There could be no place of departed spirits for him; he must have gone home to the God he worshipped.

The court is a mass of beautiful flowering trees bending over pathways, cool and shady, and the whole surrounded on three sides by a stately yellow and white structure, almost new, which I did not care in the least to inspect.

The service was conducted by one of the thou-

sands of mediocre curates who make the service of the Church of England so often intolerable. The singing by the officers was very good, and the bishop gave a sermon eminently suited to his congregation, among which the Sirdar and the Duke of Cumberland were numbered. I confess I did not hear much of it. The prospect from the window with all the memories it evoked drove the speaker and his words far away. I could see in the distance the statue of Gordon on his camel and in my mind could hear the shrieks and screeches of the barbarous hordes as they rushed over yonder barrier and in at this courtyard to be met by the blue-eyed, grey-haired man, "armed only with a little stick" (?). A thrust of a spear ended his misery, and then his head was cut off and carried to the Mahdi, while every passing brute thrust his spear into the quivering body, until it was torn to shreds and trampled into the dust, so that spot yonder was Gordon's grave as well as the scene of his death.

That is one version of his death, but not to my thinking the true one, as it does not fit the character of the man as we know it. Let us read the other version and judge between them. Neufeld states that:

"Those who knew Gordon will believe when I aver that he died as they must all have believed that he died, in spite of the official and semi-official accounts to the contrary, as the soldier and lion-hearted man he was. Gordon did not rest his hand on the hilt





From a photograph by Garrigues, Tunis  
General View of Carthage of To-day





of his sword and turn his back to his enemies to receive his death wound. He drew his sword and used it, and when he fell, his sword was dripping with the blood of his assailants, for no less than sixteen or seventeen did he cut down with it. When he fell his left hand was blacked by the unburned powder from his at least thrice emptied revolver. His boots were slippery with the blood of the slain. Gordon died in an heroic attempt to reach his troops, died as only Gordon could die. Let the world be misinformed and deceived about Sudan affairs, with the tales of so-called guides and spies, but let it be told the truth of Gordon's death."

To that add the account of one who fought with him, was never away from his side, and was trusted by him to the full. Let him tell the tale of that fatal 25th of January.

To understand the events of the day one must first study the plans of the Palace. The present structure is of the same general outline as the one destroyed.

As is the case in all houses in hot climates, the first story is very high, and we mount a long flight of steps to reach the chapel formed in one of the salons in the eastern wing. As I have stated, from my window overlooking the court I command the scene of Gordon's last stand and death.

The Palace faces north towards the Blue Nile and consists of the front and two long wings enclosing a spacious courtyard; across the fourth side towards the town and desert a tall iron fence

connects the east and west wings. In the old palace there was a vine trellis where now the gates stand, and through and over this the savages swarmed in countless hundreds, crowding the court and pouring forward and up the staircase in the west wing at the top of which they encountered Gordon and Orphali.

Let the latter tell the story; it certainly proves that both fought to the end and that Gordon's death was very different from the accounts usually given to the world, which have always struck me as theatrical and foreign to the character of Gordon, whose bravery has never been doubted and who would certainly sell his life as dearly as possible, knowing how important that life was to his soldiers and the people of the town.

"About 3 A.M. Mohammed Omar, the messenger with Cavass Ali Agha Gadri, roused me and said that an attack was being made at Kabakat (boats) on the White Nile. I informed the Pasha (Gordon) who told me to run to the telegraph office (in the palace) for more news, and there I got in touch with Hassen Bey, who was on duty (at the telegraph office two and one half miles away). He wired that an attack had been made but had been repulsed. I informed the Pasha (Gordon) who told me to close the door of his rooms again, which I did and sat down to make coffee. Then we heard more firing from the White Nile and the cavasses having run to the terrace called to me that the dervishes were coming into the

town. I ran down to Buluk Bashi Ibrahim El Nahass who had twenty-four men; fifteen we placed at the windows (rooms on the right, ground plan) and nine at the terrace overlooking the garden (G). There were also twenty-four cavasses and ferrashis; thirteen were placed at the windows (left of ground plan) under my second, Niman Agha, eight on the terrace (F), and three at the door of the palace (B). Each man had ten dozen cartridges, besides which each party had a spare case of ammunition.

"All these arrangements did not take five minutes as each knew his place. I then ran up to the Governor-General's room and informed him of the arrangements.

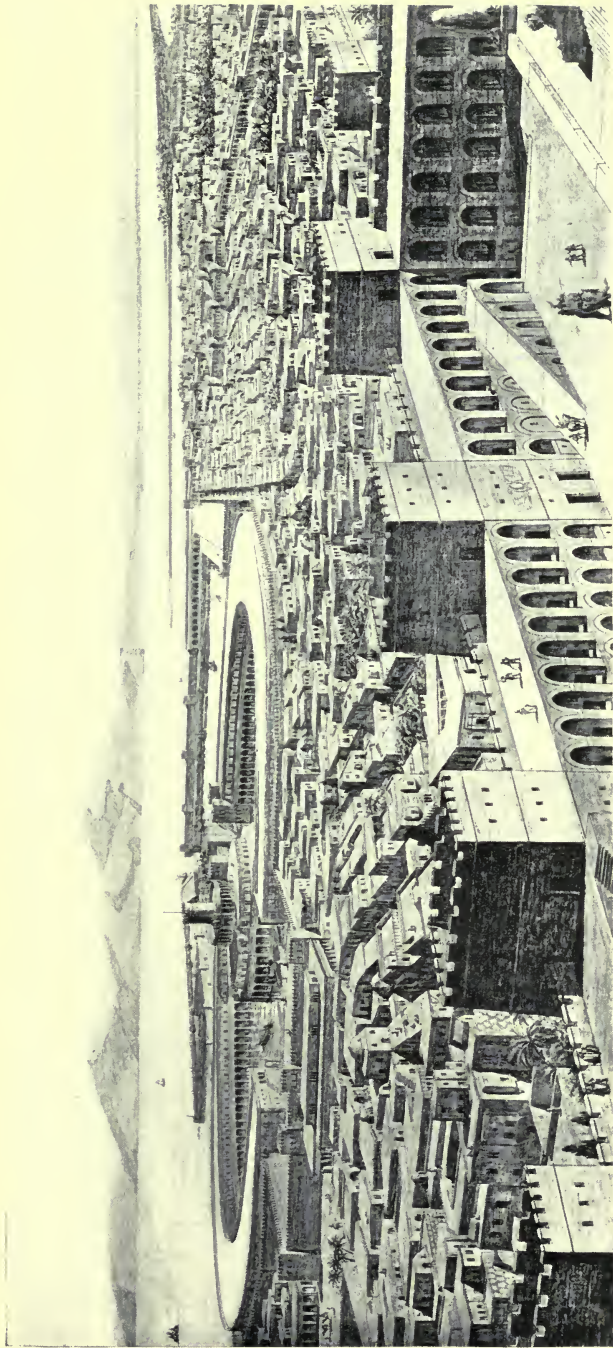
"The day had now dawned. The dervishes who ran to the front of the palace were killed by the fire from the steamer. About seventy were killed in the garden by the soldiers on the terrace, and then we saw the dervishes swarming over the trellis (A). They were met by the fire from the windows and terraces. They came very quickly and in great numbers. Some ran to the entrance (B), killed the guards, and opened the door. Then they killed all the telegraph clerks except Esmatt who hid amongst the sacks in the store-room. On the terrace they killed the soldiers and Nahass seeing the massacre jumped from the window. Four men were on guard at the private stairs but were soon all killed and after that the soldiers on the terrace (F) were killed. As others broke open the door to the private apartments, Gordon Pasha met them with his sword in his right hand and his revolver in his left, and killed two who fell at the door and one who fell down-stairs;

the others ran away. Then we heard the breaking of the private door (B) while the Pasha was loading his revolver. I was soon wounded in the face and the Pasha in the left shoulder; the man who wounded him was a half-blood slave.

"We followed then to Rouchid Bey's room, killing three and wounding many, others ran away and fell down the stairs. We went back to the Pasha's room and reloaded but the dervishes came back, and I was wounded in my right leg. We attacked the dervishes on the private staircase (D) and while passing the door a native of Khartoum dressed as a dervish stabbed the Pasha, with a spear, in the left shoulder. I cut at the man's hand and he ran off and was killed by falling on a spear held by one of his companions on the steps.

"More dervishes swarmed along the corridor (from H) and we returned to meet them; I received a thrust in the left hand, but the Pasha cut the man down, kicked him on the head and he died; while we were standing in the corridor a tall negro fired a shot from the door (H) and the bullet struck Gordon in the right breast and the Pasha ran up and shot the man dead. The dervishes ran to the private stairs and we fired into them but the Pasha was getting weak from loss of blood. *We fought these dervishes down the private stairs until we reached the last one* when a native of Katimeh speared the Pasha in the right hip, but I shot him, and the Pasha fell down on the cavasses mat at the door. He was dead, and as I turned to seek refuge in the finance office (F) I was struck down and lost my senses.

"Left for dead I was helped in the afternoon by



Restored by Paul Aucler

Ancient Carthage

Kind permission of Delagrave, Paris





a man whom I knew to go to the river for water. Then I saw the body of the Pasha but the head was not there."

The blood stains on that staircase were visible in 1887 and all who saw them remarked upon their number and extent, stating that it was impossible that they should have come from one body. Neufeld saw them that year (1887). This is certainly a sure proof that Gordon and Orphali (the only two men upstairs) fought all the way down those four flights.

It is quite impossible that all that blood could have come from a body which had been dragged down those steps some time after death. Knowing Gordon's reputation for bravery it is quite certain that he would fight to the last. Those stains came from the dervishes through whose masses he so vainly tried to hack his way to his troops.

All that is more in keeping with the known character of the man than the statement that "He made a gesture of scorn with his right hand and turned his back.—He made no resistance and did not fire a shot," a statement which comes from a man whose tongue Gordon had threatened to cut out for lying and who, when he escaped to Cairo, sustained his reputation.

While one does not believe that Slatin Pasha would knowingly make a misstatement, the condition of that staircase certainly proves that he



was wrong when he stated that "the first man up the steps plunged his spear into Gordon's body, who fell forward on his face without uttering a word, when his murderers dragged his body down the steps to the entrance and there cut off his head." They certainly cut off his head but he most certainly carried that head on his shoulders to the fatal spot. His head was sent to the Mahdi at Omdurman, where it was pitched in the sand at the feet of yonder smiling little man, Slatin Pasha,—but he did not smile then. In chains himself, he was forced to gaze unmoved on the awful sight. "The blue eyes were half opened, the mouth perfectly natural, but the hair of his head and his short whiskers were almost white."

"Is not this the head of your uncle the unbeliever?"

"What of it? A brave soldier who fell at his post; happy is he to have fallen, his sufferings are over."

It is said the head was fixed in a tree in Omdurman where the people stoned it.

You will look in vain for any tree there now.

It is stated that the Mahdi was very wroth at the death of Gordon, whom he really admired and respected, and that he had given orders that he was not to be harmed in any way.

## CHAPTER VI

The Government's Warning—Mr. Gladstone—Slowness of his Government—Lord Cromer's Opinion of Gordon—Gordon's Religion and its Effect—Fatal Delays of the Government—Lord Northbrook's Opinion of Gladstone—Gordon's Last Cry—His Funeral Services Fourteen Years Later.

**W**ARNED before General Gordon started south that he was undertaking a service of great difficulty and danger, the government cannot claim that it did not know his danger. True, he himself was optimistic when he went there, but on March 8th of that fatal year '84 he warned them of the storm which was likely to break and of the probability of his being "hemmed in," and he added, "I feel a conviction that I shall be caught in Khartoum."

The Mudir of Berber had been advised by telegraph of the intended abandonment of the Sudan by Egypt. Gordon confirmed this, and the whole was a fatal error, for it took the heart out of the tribes, who, in self-preservation, could do no less than make the best terms possible with the rising power of the Mahdi.

To an outsider reading the records to-day of

those fatal months the idea foremost in his mind must be that much valuable time was wasted in sending despatches upon unimportant matter and calmly waiting the reply when every moment was precious if there was any real desire to save Gordon.

Was the Hon. Mr. Gladstone ever concerned with anything save his own career? While the savages were gathering by tens of thousands he calmly demands before any move can be made that "a full report be sent *by mail* as to the details of each garrison," "a report already sent him three months previously and which filled five pages of a blue book,"—to be sent *by mail* when every hour was precious. If all the hours wasted by such demands could have been saved the relief would have reached Khartoum months before it did. Gordon would have been saved, and England would have been spared that inscription on his tomb in St. Paul's Cathedral. On the other hand it is stated of Gordon that he possessed

"none of the qualities necessary for that post, coolness, self-control, and clear-headedness. He should have been consistent, deliberate in the formation of his plans after a careful study of the facts, and steadfast in their execution when once his mind was made up."

On the contrary,

"he was hot headed, impulsive, and swayed by his emotions, possessed a total absence of self-control,



From a photograph by Photochrom

The Market at Karawan



liable to fits of ungovernable and often unreasonable passion, formed rapid opinions without deliberation, and rarely held to one opinion for long; his journal is a mass of inconsistencies; in fact, aside from personal courage, great fertility in military resources, a lively repugnance to injustice and oppression and meanness of every description, and the power of acquiring influence over those immediately around him, he does not appear to have possessed any of the qualities which would have fitted him to undertake the difficult task in the Sudan."<sup>1</sup>

Was not Gordon's religion at times rather more of a hindrance than a help? He could not believe that those Europeans who had adopted the religion of the prophet were to be trusted or believed. I doubt if like scruples would have disturbed Napoleon or Washington, Wellington or Grant, if such apostates could have been made use of to save a city.

Is it true that Gordon absolutely refused to receive Slatin and those others or even to answer their letters? Was it any of his business whether people changed their religion or not?—and certainly that act affected the individual only, and does not appear to have affected these in question at all as they had none of any sort worth mentioning, like a guide I had in Turkestan who changed his for business purposes. Life being all we are sure of, how many are there amongst us who would not do likewise if death by torture were the alternative? Slatin's religious retrograde does not

<sup>1</sup> Lord Cromer's *Modern Egypt*.

appear to have affected his standing here, though his relapse to Christianity certainly has affected it with the followers of the prophet. He could return to us and easily assume his ancient faith, but he could not go to the Arabs and claim their religion as his own now,—they would promptly cut his throat.

The bronze face of Gordon's statue gives one a far different impression of the man from that conveyed by his photograph. No one can look upon the latter and call it strong, especially in the eyes. He was undoubtedly a noble character, a good general in many respects, but not the one to deal with these tigers in war.

One is forced to believe that Gordon, while a brave man, was not a great general. He seemed to imagine that by his personality and by addresses he could "deal with savages"; it would have been as easy to do so with a herd of wolves. It certainly was his duty to have gotten, as he could have done, all the Europeans out of Khartoum, knowing that the native population was on its own soil and would—as they did do—pass over to the Mahdi and be no worse off save for imprisonment for a few. Realising a week before the fall that the case was hopeless, he did attempt to send all away that he could, and ordered a steamboat gotten ready for that purpose, but the people refused to go without him and even plotted to carry him away in his sleep. Discovering this he smiled and stated that while it was his



duty to save them if he could do so, it was also his duty as a soldier to "stick to his post." Somewhat different that from the commander of Port Arthur who by his surrender released that large Japanese force for a northern movement, and so sealed the fate of his country's cause.

General Gordon knew the hesitating policy of his government then in office, none better, and in his heart I doubt if he ever believed that relief would reach him in time.

The fortifications, or what is left of them, do not impress the beholder to-day with the belief that they could ever have been very effective. Yet they held the savages at bay and if the defence could have been maintained for two days longer history might bear another record, for even the Arabs acknowledge that the appearance of those boats would, by showing that relief was really coming, have saved the city. Their non-appearance disheartened the tribes,—so Khartoum fell and the power of the false prophet rose and rose to a flood which cost England years of work, millions of treasure, and hosts of valuable lives to arrest and turn.

While it may have been a mistake to send a man like General Gordon to the Sudan, there can be no justification for not promptly sending relief when it was needed and well known to the whole world that it was needed.

It was not for six weeks after the fall of Berber that preparations for such an expedition were



begun; all the while the British government knew that unless such an expedition was sent, Khartoum and Gordon, and all with him, would be lost,—that *prompt* action was necessary, as only when the Nile was high,—a very short period,—could rapid movements be accomplished, but while precious time was passing the government talked and talked and waited and waited and requested “further information by *mail*.”

Even after all communication with Khartoum had been cut off there followed four or five months of fatal indecision, and “when it came to a question of action the government appears to have rarely done the right thing at the right moment” (Cromer). There is scarcely a doubt if the expedition had been sent in April or May instead of August the end would have been attained. The responsibility rests on Mr. Gladstone, who stated that he had had no proof that Gordon was in danger, a statement he knew to be untrue when he made it. As Lord Cromer states, “he did not desire to believe a fact which was naturally most distasteful to him.” Lord Northbrook’s note to Lord Cromer shows that at least all that government did not agree with Mr. Gladstone: “I am afraid that all you have written is quite true. As I had the misfortune to be a member of Mr. Gladstone’s government, I have to bear the blame with the rest. But I resolved never to serve under him again.

“Mr. Gladstone’s error of judgment in delaying too long the despatch of the Nile expedition left a stain on the reputation of England which it will be beyond the power of either the impartial historian or the partial apologist to efface.”<sup>1</sup> It is not surprising that the House of Commons condemned the government, which only escaped censure by a majority of fourteen.

Can the world ever forget Gordon’s pitiful cry in November of that year, “If it is right to send an expedition now, why was it not right to send it before?” He would not have had to utter that cry had Napoleon the Great been Prime Minister of England. The man “who moved whilst his enemies were thinking” would have saved the nation’s honour.

As I stand gazing northward, around a bend of the river comes what Gordon so longed for and waited for, a steamboat. To-day it means nothing of importance,—what would it not have meant to that man, surrounded by the black devils of this awful land?

Well, at least, the failure of that relief has made Gordon immortal on this earth. Had it arrived and saved the day, the enemies of his administration would have torn his laurels to tatters, even his Chinese record would not have saved him; the fact that he had advocated placing the slave trader Zobeir Pasha in power here for a time would have been for ever cast in his teeth,

<sup>1</sup> Cromer’s *Modern Egypt*.

yet all who know anything about the situation here at that time believe that it would have been the wisest course.

How easy it is to sit comfortably at home, thousands of miles away, and insist that our method of governing a country which we have never seen and of which we know nothing is the best, wisest, and only course. The people of certain sections of our land so insisted towards the South after the Civil War,—what the result was to the South, all the world knows.

Abraham Lincoln might have saved all that had he been spared to us,—he would have accomplished more than any other, though for his own sake it was well that he was not allowed to live, as the Angel Gabriel could not have satisfied the nation during the four years following his death. God spared him that,—he had done enough and deserved his immortality.

Again, we started in to do the same thing as regards the Philippines, but President McKinley thwarted that by sending out as governor the man who, with his farsightedness he was confident would one day fill the executive chair of the nation, as he is doing, and with a knowledge of our distant possession which enables him to know what he is about and to realise that the conditions which prevail in one section of the world are unsuitable for those of another. But to return.

As we leave the Palace we turn for a glimpse of Gordon's garden. It is a mass of luxuriant



From a photograph by Lehnert & Landrock, Tunis  
The Mosque of the Swords, Karawan



foliage, a blaze of beautiful flowers to-day, but when Kitchener came here it had almost given up the struggle. Neglected through all those years, it still protested against annihilation. The orange and citron struggled to bear their hard green bitter fruit—the pomegranates starred the desolation here and there with flame colour. The whole was a rack and ruin of pale sickly green slowly suffocating in the desert sands. Only that hateful herald of desolation—the poisonous Sodom apple—appeared to thrive and rejoice in the destruction. The Palace, which is to-day a stately two-storied structure, had been reduced to a formless heap. The staircase down which Gordon fought his way had long since vanished. Here where, after church, a well dressed company lingers under the spreading branches of a beautiful acacia with the Blue Nile sparkling at their feet, was held Gordon's funeral service. Above the spot where he died fluttered again the Union Jack and Egyptian flag, while the troops of the two nations formed a rectangle with the Sirdar in the centre. The national anthems were over when on the hot still air fell the solemn notes of the Dead March from *Saul*, and forth came four chaplains, Catholic, Anglican, Presbyterian, and Methodist, and formed themselves before that high altar, the ruined palace. The Presbyterian read the 15th psalm, the Anglican murmured the Lord's Prayer, while "snow-haired Father Brindle, best beloved of priests, laid his

helmet in the dust and read a memorial prayer bare-headed in the sun." Were there any dry eyes there as the black pipers wailed out Gordon's favourite hymn, "The darkness deepens, Lord with me abide"? Therefore we commit his body to the earth—therefore we commit his soul to God.

## CHAPTER VII

The Trip to Gondokoro—Departure from Khartoum—English Officers—The Ride to Port Sudan—A Burial in the Red Sea—The Opium Trade—Customs of the African Tribes—Marriages—Suez and the Ride to Cairo.

WE had about given up the trip to Gondokoro, but to-night Col. Asser convinced us that we should go. Certainly it is now or never, and as we are not due anywhere at any time, it seems rather a shame not to do so. The land and the people, the wild game and the birds, will fast change and vanish with the incoming of our dear and necessary civilisation. It may be stupid coming down the river, but it cannot be all cakes and ale in this life. Personally I have always had pleasant times on river trips, and the journey will be most incomplete if I do not see the White Nile in its solemn reaches towards the heart of darkest Africa. While the tse-tse fly is there, he is not as yet dangerous.

We crossed the river this morning to inspect the boat, and find her absolutely new, a tremendous card in her favour in a hot land. Built for the sun, she has double coverings with air cham-



bers overhead; the cabins are commodious, with stationary washstands, spring beds, and electric lights; a roomy salon forward, and pleasant decks. On top of all, like a large pilot-house on a Mississippi steamboat, is a spacious room entirely enclosed in netting where one may sit with comfort, smiling the while at the assaults of all tropical insects. I think we shall hold off a while before deciding, and in the end go, at least I hope so. The following morning finds me in bed with fever, so we do not go. Let me utter a word of warning,—never go out in the tropics without your pith helmet. Yesterday was a cool grey day with a chilly wind blowing and so I ventured to do so, with the above result. For the Anglo-Saxon the sun here never loses its pernicious effect. I rejoiced in a temporary freedom from the stiff helmet—but—behold me laid out.

A party returning to-day does not give encouraging reports and that, added to my seediness, settles the question. The trip takes twenty-eight days.<sup>1</sup>

It is with regret that I leave Khartoum, and we all feel so. On the whole, it is a delightful place, at least it was so for us. Yet I can scarcely recommend it to the ordinary tourists who might

<sup>1</sup> Weeks later I met a man in Algiers who made the trip. He reported that the sail was a stupid and most uncomfortable one and that little wild life was seen, while the mosquitoes were appalling. The entire month was spent under netting, perforce.

know no one here. The distance to be traversed in slowly moving trains over a glaring desert is very great. Yet how rapid and luxurious they would have appeared to one following on foot over the blistering sands, and through the torrid heat of day and almost arctic cold of night.

The sights of Khartoum, save to those interested in its history, are not many, and could all be seen in short order, and unless you brought letters to some resident you would have a lonely time, especially if the history of the place, its past, present, and future, did not interest you.

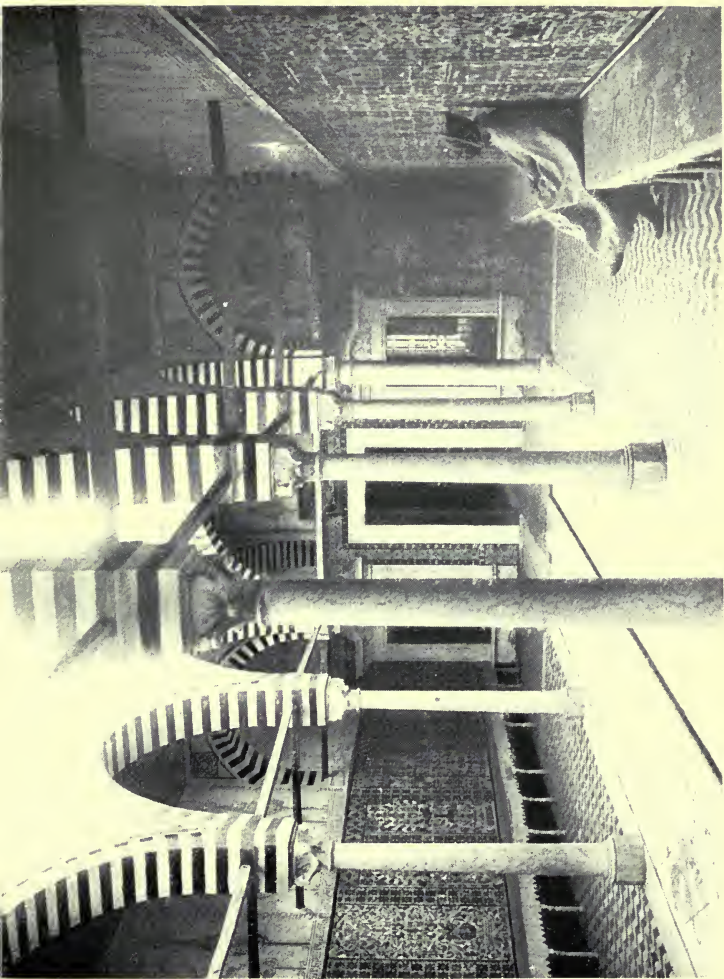
We were fortunate enough to have several good letters and so met lots of interesting people, and should have met them all had we remained longer. But without these, while you might accomplish it in the end, it would be difficult to meet the English residents.

You remember the poor German professor who loved his home and his repose above all else, but who being induced to enter a balloon was blown far south and dropped, in the heart of an African desert, squarely on the back of an ostrich. The astonished bird ran away with him some five hundred miles or so and dumped him at the feet of an Englishman, who refused to speak to him because they had never been introduced—so you had better bring letters.

It is always possible for a gentleman to make his way with the English officers. They are generally charming men, most kindly, considerate,

and courteous, putting themselves out for you in a manner Americans never think of doing. If they know that you desire to meet any particular person they will, if possible, see that you do so, and it is your own fault if you do not have a pleasant time amongst them. However, one can always manage to bring letters and they clear one's pathway at once.

We leave the pleasant hotel with regret. Our rooms, amongst the waving tops of the acacias, have been like the "shadow of a great rock in a weary land." Our host has done his best, even to offering me the use of his gaily caparisoned white camel. As we pass out the camel grunts his adieux and a little gazelle comes up for a last caress. A grey donkey, the prima donna of the "Khartoum brass band," which must, by the nightly racket, number thousands in its ranks, "hee-haws" his sorrow at parting, but it's sweet sorrow to us so far as he is concerned. This we do not tell him, and he prolongs his woe until it ends in gurgles somewhere in his "innards." The bright-eyed little black boy, clothed in a sweet smile, shows more teeth than usual as we pass him, enthroned on the wheel of his *sakiya* and driving his sacred oxen, for here you find the sacred beast of India. Then, we are over the dusty bank and down on the ferry, prosaic but necessary ferry. All around us the waters are gilded with the departing sunlight, afar off the desert stretches full of mysterious possibilities, below the glowing



From a photograph by Lehnert & Landrock, Tunis  
The Mosque of the Barber, Karawan



sky twinkle the lights of Omdurman, and sharply silhouetted against the light amidst the delicate fronds of a palm grove pass some stately lateen sails like the wings of great birds.

Khartoum, with its villas and palace, its university and grand mosque, pass for the last time in stately review, and we turn on the farther bank for a final glimpse of the whole, and then, memories and all, it has vanished for ever.

There is the usual confusion at starting. Cook's agent, the only one in the place, has made the usual errors of omission and commission. A few of us tell each other what we think of each other; were we Hindoos or Arabs we would abuse each other's ancestry, but we pause there.

However, it is all arranged at last, and silently the long white train glides out over a moonlit desert, and in a few moments is in solitudes, which bear the appearance of knowing nothing of man or his work—solitudes which have swallowed millions of us and will swallow millions more and give no sign. Yonder are some lonely graves, marked only by a slight mound and a ring of white stones. It is cool in the carriages, too cool to need the electric fans, and we are shortly settled for the night.

Morning finds us past the junction of Atbara and well on towards the Red Sea. There is no vestige of vegetation which would be of any use to man or beast; the desert is more stony and forbidding in appearance than usual, for it always



seems possible that with water something might be raised out of sand, but out of these black rocks nothing could ever come save reflected heat. How many novelists and historians have referred to the wild land between the Nile and the Red Sea—here it is—and the world holds no region more desolate.

We find the ride to Port Sudan much more comfortable than our south-bound journey. There is not half so much dust and the northern winds keep the heat down, rendering the electric fans unnecessary. Towards noon our train enters the mountains and I believe attains an altitude of three thousand feet, though there is apparently no difference in the temperature. We do not approach very near to the hills, but some fantastic outlines rise up around us. There was water here once, but in remote antiquity, as a petrified forest proves—some of the tree trunks are still erect.

Port Sudan is reached at six-thirty and it is a great pleasure to smell the sea instead of the dust, to feel the cool, damp winds, and to board a spacious ship where each has a room and to spare. It is well to watch your luggage even in a short transfer such as this from train to ship.

Port Sudan, lying thirty miles north of Suakin, has been made the terminus of the railway because of the superior harbour. It is too dark to see anything but I am told that as the place is but four

years old there is as yet nothing save a few warehouses and dwellings.

Our ship gets under way without loss of time, and I am soon asleep, rocked by the murmuring waves. Ships in this part of the world haunt the African shore as assistance would be obtainable there in case of trouble. The Arabian shore is infested with pirates and short shrift is made of a ship in trouble and of her passengers and crew. Our captain was once on a steamship which ran on the rocks securely, jamming her bow thereon. Time was life and property, as numberless native craft were putting off from the Arabian shore. What that meant every one on board knew only too well. So an order was given to drive the ship full speed ahead and full astern and by so working her they literally tore off the bow and left it there, steaming off just as the savages approached. So he relates, though one cannot be censured for doubting the tale.

While the S. S. *Prince Abbas* is far from all which we desire in ships, still the sail up the Red Sea is cool and delightful and such a respite after the sands and heat of the desert that we forgive much.

To-day a poor Greek died in the second class, and was buried in the sea. Securely sewed up in heavy canvas and heavily weighted, his body will probably rest unmolested in the deep water, which here reaches three thousand feet, and in some spots six thousand. Being a Greek and



with no priest of that church on board, there was no service save the prayers of a Roman priest which the good man read to himself. With the British flag at half-mast, and covered by the flag of his own land, the dead flashed out of sight and, was gone. Poor fellow; but it is perhaps as well so, as he was en route to the Greek Hospital at Alexandria to undergo an operation. It is evidently a charitable institution as the man had but two pounds in cash and a few poor clothes with him.

Personally I should rather be buried in this sparkling blue water than under the burning sands of yonder desert, not that it makes any difference, save that there one's grave is too shallow to protect from prowling beasts, while here the deep waters will furnish sure sanctuary for what they receive. Still it seems hard to toss what was so lately a man moving about amongst us overboard like an empty sack.

The ships on the long Pacific voyages are obliged to carry coffins for the Chinese,—queer shaped things made out of slabs of trees spliced together and plugged up at either end. There is always one or two of them standing around on the lower deck.

During one of my recent voyages to Japan I had noticed a very jolly old Chinaman who always greeted me with a smile each morning as I leaned on the rail above him. He seemed the life and soul of the whole ship down there, and kept up a constant chatter when not playing some practical

joke on his fellows. I missed him for a day or two and finally asked where he was, whereupon one of a group playing fan-tan on a coffin stopped long enough to glance at me while he rapped the coffin significantly, and then resumed his game. So, the old man had grown weary of it all and was inside there, chuckling, I have no doubt, at the good rest he was having.

The Chinese are obliged to deposit some sixty dollars with the steamship line when they leave home. This is used, if they die, for the coffin, the barber who embalms them, and the doctor. Many of them do die, and they say that coffins are stacked up in the lower hold by the hundreds. These Chinese receptacles for the dead, whilst massive and strong in appearance, are not made of hard wood and soon fall to pieces, as all who have travelled the Bubbling Well road at Shanghai can testify. They stand on the surface of the ground all round the late dwelling of their occupants, and are dotted all over the landscape. One's experience is not pleasant as the carriage rolls along or one's pony jumps a big one during the Paper Chase. The deep waters of the outer ocean are better than this. The poor man just cast overboard left a wife down in the Abyssinian mountains. He had been in the employment of the Sudanese government, from which I suppose she will receive some support. It must be bitter indeed to be so poor that you cannot accompany a sick one on an almost surely fatal journey.

One meets with many intelligent men in these farther corners of the world, connected generally with government service, either as soldiers or in the civil service, and all have had great experience in the wide extent of the British Empire. The inane club talk of the greater cities holds no place, and one is always treated to something interesting.

There is one on this ship, Major Anderson, Inspector of the Sudan. He goes to Khartoum every year. He tells me that they hope great things from the rubber and gum trade of the Sudan, especially the former, and as the ship glides along through the luminous night, finding that I am interested, talks on and on until midnight calls a halt.

The apparently sleepy condition of some native passengers on the lower deck brings out the information that the unlawful importation of hashish in Egypt and all this land has become so profitable that it is carried on, generally by the Greeks, to an enormous extent. The government does all it can to suppress it and maintains a coast guard on camels all around the land, still it goes on, and not long since a Greek merchant wagered with one of the officers that he would successfully pass in a valuable shipment. The wager was accepted and,—the government won. Whereupon, the Greek, from some point on the Red Sea, telegraphed "Congratulations," and received answer "Regrets."



From a photograph by Miss Helen Parmelee  
A Muezzin at Karawan



All sorts of devices are resorted to; amongst them false nuts are made and filled with the drug, and the inoffensive donkey quietly trots past the guard with his valuable cargo,—so runs the world away.

Far in the dark Sudan back of those sombre mountains yonder is a tribe called the Sobats, who, when approached by the missionaries, took no interest in their teachings, saying that they had a better religion of their own and needed no change,—that hundreds of years ago, a man came to them, a fair-faced, blue-eyed, fair-haired man, who taught them for years in all just things and good ways, and that finally a day arrived when he summoned them together and told them that the time had come to leave them, but that all the years to follow, if they would go through certain forms and ceremonies and call on him, he would always be there in spirit to guide them as they should go; that if they held together and had one king, only, of the royal blood, and followed his teachings, they would prosper, but if they became divided, they would fall. Then entering his canoe, he vanished like Hiawatha, "To the region of the sunset, to the land of the hereafter," and they lived on and on in the place to which he had brought them and are prosperous to this day. When the Catholic missionaries arrived they told the tribe that the man was Jesus of Nazareth, who passing onward had given his life for all mankind, "the end justifying the means" of that tale. These

people still live together and are prosperous. They are strictly moral. A sinful daughter is slain by her father's hand and a man who sins is sold in slavery to the family he has injured.

It would appear that the middleman has his place here in all transactions. If it is a contract of marriage the bridegroom comes to the family home of his adored, bringing his father and all his kin with him. There are already assembled the bride and her relations, and there, between the two factions, sits the middleman. The mother opens the game by a long laudation of her daughter's ancestors to the remotest ages, and these families sometimes possess ancestral trees that make those of Europe mere child's play. Having made the glory of the dead evident to all present, she turns to her daughter, shows her good points, tells of her calm and loving disposition, also that she thoroughly understands all about the house and its management and the care of the fields and the camels, cows and donkeys. Says that for generations the highest in the land have striven for alliance with her family and that this present offer is only considered because times are degenerate and there are no great men left in the land. At this the groom's father rises, and equals for his son her statements as to her daughter. He is descended from a long line of warriors and could, if a proper bride were secured, as has not been in this case, be the father of another long line of equally brave warriors.



Then a pause occurs, during which the looker-on is impressed with the belief that no wedding can possibly take place, and if it does, after all those personal remarks, the future cannot hold much chance for peace and happiness, for surely no European parent would ever forget what had been flung at them and theirs.

However, here comes in the middleman and after much work succeeds in throwing a certain amount of oil upon the troubled waters. Then in the sweetest and most insinuating voice he asks what the bride's mother expects to receive for her peerless pearl of great price, and apparently it is a great price which is demanded. It is generally for so many camels, cows, and donkeys, to be handed over to the bride's family. The number demanded is so great that the groom's father, rising with great dignity and wrapping his burnous about him, summons his son and his tribe to go forth and away.

But here again comes in the middleman and in the end an understanding is arrived at. You who have purchased anything, be it ever so small, in the Orient will understand, for you have gone through the entire process, only then, you walked off with your purchase, but, in the Sudan, the bridegroom is still far from his bride, the mother stating that, now the financial part being duly arranged, though personally she considers that her daughter has been given away in every sense of that word, but since 't is done, 't is done, her daughter,



while willing to be entirely at the disposal of the husband for four days and nights, must be allowed perfect liberty for the other three, to keep company with any other man she desires, and in every way the husband having absolutely no claim upon her during that period. That this is objected to, on the groom's part, goes without saying, but while he finally gets this clause cut down somewhat, he does not do so altogether and his bride to be is assured that from, let us say, Friday evening to Sunday morning—she is to be her own mistress absolutely. One condition only is imposed, viz., that if she takes up with another man, he must be of the tribe, in order that the blood be not polluted.

All this settled, there is prolonged feasting, and finally the happy couple depart for the home made ready. For his part of the week the groom is, let us hope, supremely happy, but as Friday approaches, he naturally becomes somewhat restive, unreasonable, I acknowledge, but most of us would feel likewise. However, he has not lost out as yet, and begins by beseeching his bride to remain true to him and him alone. She does not give in without long struggles, and only then on bribes. "Fatima has a beautiful bracelet, I must have the like," and so it goes on, and her husband has to promise or she certainly would go forth, nor does she accede to his wishes until she has the bauble in her hand. This goes on every week, and until age has rend-

ered her threats of no weight. Then comes his day.

I could scarcely recommend the adoption of this custom amidst the Anglo-Saxon race, but after all, in certain circles, is the difference very great?

As we move to retire a young man from the East advises me to go to Borneo to live, says it is a charming spot, that he killed a cobra seven feet long in his bedroom the day before he left home. There is also another interesting snake which spreads its skin in a semblance of wings and sails down upon one from the tree-tops. Poisonous? Oh, yes, of course.

What a night! What a pity to lose any of it in sleep! The level sea is illuminated with fields of phosphorescence, while above, the heavens are close down upon us and the stars wonderfully brilliant.

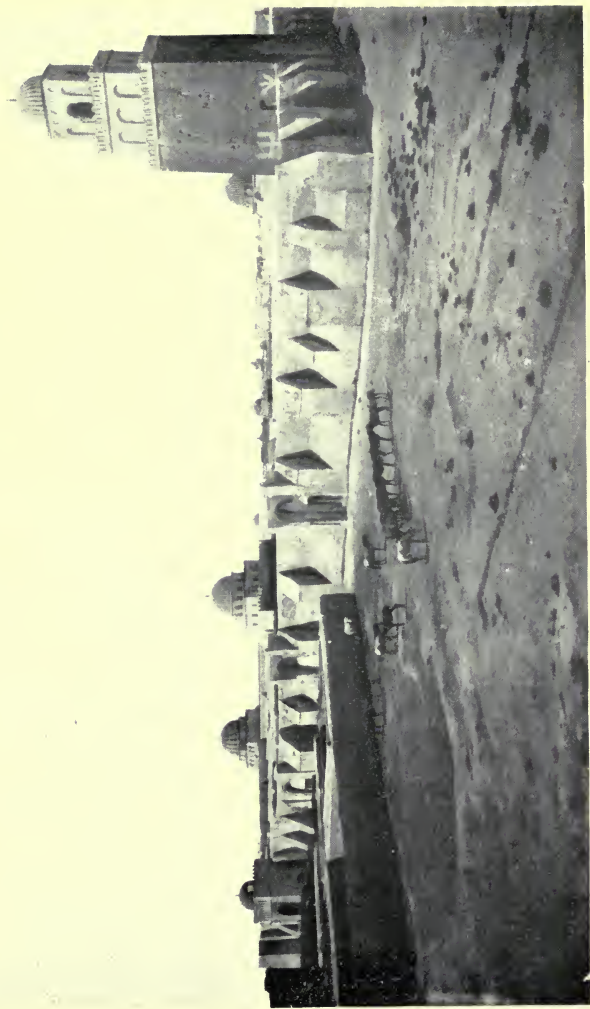
At some period in the unknown past the sleeping earth has awakened and yawned heavily just here, yawned deep and long, twelve hundred miles long and a thousand fathoms deep. Perhaps in some uneasy moment she may shut up this huge mouth of hers and unite once more the continents of Asia and Africa.

I shall always think of the man we have just sent overboard as walking around way down there in the darkness, upright because of the irons bound to his feet, yet, because of the density of the water, unable ever to reach the bottom and

be at rest. Hence he must, until his final disintegration, go solemnly bobbing around unless the waters mash him flat, which they probably will do.

Early morning brings us to Suez, where, no matter how small the ship or how few the passengers, there is always an enormous amount of noise and confusion. To-day is no exception and our tempers are not improved when we find we have been delayed, almost to the point of missing the Cairo train, by an Englishman who declined to get up ahead of his usual hour and allow the medical inspector to do his work. Fortunately for him we were not told the cause of the delay until it was past and attributed it to Egyptian slowness, whereas it was far otherwise. We just made the train, though we had been in port four hours and the train was next the ship. But I anticipate.

Through the centre of Suez flows the broad canal, on either hand stretch away the yellow sands of the desert to their meeting with the sky, while the town seems to cling wildly to the canal as though afraid of being lost in the limitless expanse of sand. Overhead vast flocks of flamingoes and pelicans fairly darken the sun, while below the people darken the earth. It seems verily the hub of the universe, and looking around one would judge that at present all the people of the world are striving to reach it. The sea is thickly dotted with craft of every de-



From a photograph by Garrigues, Tunis  
The Exterior of the Grand Mosque, Karawan



scription, while away, over the low-lying land, long trains of camels slowly wend their way, all bound for this one point.

As you enter the harbour the entire population comes out to meet you, while those who cannot find space in the water, crowd the adjacent banks. Americans and English, Chinese and Australians, the turbaned Indian, the dusky Moor, and wild-looking Bedouin crowd closely around you. On the top of that bank a stately sheik of the desert (one notes from his green turban that he is a descendant of the prophet) has spread his prayer-rug and, with his face toward Mecca, and his thoughts on Paradise, is going through his devotions,—oblivious of all around,—while just beyond an irate “clergyman of the Church of England” is, with a green umbrella, soundly beating a donkey-boy over the head, probably the demands for “backsheesh” having exhausted even his patience. As we leave the ship, we find that an American has interrupted the devotions of the sheik by trying to buy his prayer-rug; evidently the price is not sufficient as yet, for the old man, standing with arms extended toward Mecca and with eyes on the Yankee, is in grave deliberation as to whether he had best serve “God or Mammon.” Mr. America says nothing, but waits, just allowing the silver to gleam for an instant as he slowly slips it back into his pocket. That settles it, and when I see the sheik later what he has to offer to his God is offered on the bare sand.

However, the "groves were God's first temples," and prayer-rugs merely an invention of later times.

Mohammed Ali superintended the getting of our trunks aboard the train. His arms flew around like a windmill in a tempest, his black face flashed with rage as he beat those bearers over the intervening fifty feet between ship and train. He shoved me into a compartment and shut the door on me, and the last I saw he was the centre of a riot concerning the division of spoils.

In Europe all that would have attracted a crowd, but not so here. The stolid Orientals paid no sort of attention. Naturally, perhaps, as it goes on with the arrival of every ship and train, but one wonders what the condition of things must be when a great liner touches here. I should certainly say that apoplexy must result to Mohammed Ali, but the train has glided on over the level land.

It is yet early as it steams off, up by the canal, which, three hundred feet broad, stretches away before us like a pale green ribbon on a field of gold, its waters crowded with gay coloured shipping, its banks dotted with people, generally clothed in blue with crimson or white turbans (that being the usual dress of the Fellahin), here and there a signal station with its many-coloured flags, while above flocks of crimson flamingoes and snow-white pelicans float majestically across



a sky so deeply, darkly, beautifully blue that those of Sicily pale by comparison. The picture is most brilliant and one never to be forgotten.

Later in the day we are favoured with a perfect "mirage." Vast flocks of brilliant birds pass and re-pass in the distance, but all upside down; a sudden change in the atmosphere, and they vanish.

At Ismailia the train leaves the canal and turns toward Cairo. Miles of the desert are passed, Tel-el-Kebir, with its record of blood, is left behind you, and ere long the setting sun lights up the waves of the desert, touches with gold the Mokatam hills, the minarets of the mosque of Mohammed Ali, and the summits of the great pyramids. Then you know you are once more near Cairo, the City of the Caliphs. Soon the houses and streets close in around you but the noise and scrimmage of the Orient is now altogether lacking. In the spacious station you might fancy yourself in Europe. Outside, liveried porters and hotel motor busses keep up the delusion.

The houses hereabouts are all European in architecture, but they have not destroyed Shepheard's Hotel with its famous terrace. Crossing the latter we are shortly comfortably ensconced in the former and rest for a night. Longer is not permitted in Cairo.



## CHAPTER VIII

The Streets of Cairo—The Citadel and Panorama—Shepherd's Hotel and Changes in Life there—No Intercourse with Egyptians—Cairo in 1873—A Ball at the Gezira Palace—The Old Nile Life—Slavery—Cairo in 1909—Life in her Streets—Social Life.

IN these degenerate days one may not depart from Shepherd's on a donkey—that would be bad form—but farther along in the square of Mohammed Ali fashion is not yet supreme.

There the candidates for our favour stand in rows, calmly regarding us with great black eyes and ever and anon pointing their ears forward the more certainly to catch what is being said about them. Not that it is said in a whisper, I would have you know, but amidst such a babel of voices that in our land would cause a descent of the police. The different merits of each are enlarged upon at great length. We are assured that "Adelaide Ristori" possesses heels that will soon leave "Martin Luther" far behind, while the virtues of "Lucrezia Borgia" would make "Osiris" blush with envy. That white one is "Moses in the Bulrushes," which being translated means "Sarah Bernhardt." I ask for my old

donkey, "Helema," who, alas, has been in his grave these many years; but I am answered that *his* great-grandson, "Madame Recamier," possesses all the merits of *his* distinguished ancestor. He is therefore selected, and in company with "Lucrezia Borgia," and "Osiris," carries us swiftly past the Esbekiya Gardens, through the shadowy "Mousky," where stray sunbeams light up gorgeous colours and the balmy air is laden with attar of roses. Now a long string of camels just in from Arabia, now a whole harem mounted on donkeys and guarded by a repulsive-looking eunuch, pass us by; and now a funeral procession, with its strange screech-owl cry of mourning.

Through a shadowy doorway comes the swish, swish, of swiftly moving garments, and the uncertain light shows us the ghostly figures of the dancing dervishes fluttering round and round like great white moths.

As we leave the streets and mount to the citadel, the Khedive, a pleasant-faced man of middle life, dressed in black and wearing the "fez," passes us in an open landau, preceded by two running footmen dressed in flowing white garments, with velvet jackets embroidered in gold, and carrying long wands in their hands. Softly on the evening air come the slow, solemn notes of an English funeral march, and we stand reverently, with heads uncovered, as they bear past us all that is left of some poor soldier boy who will never see Merry England any more. No grave under the haw-

thorn hedges—only a shallow pit in these horrible shifting sands that have swallowed so many thousands of us. “Oh, the weariness of it all!”

Upward and upward we mount, until from the platform before the alabaster mosque of Mohammed Ali we gaze upon a panorama unrivalled in all the world. Behind us rise the minarets of that beautiful mosque, crowned with the glittering crescent. To the left is the window through which the last of the Mamelukes jumped his horse to escape Mohammed Ali and certain death. There at our feet spreads the fantastic Oriental city. Off to the right the tombs of the caliphs lift their dainty domes, while farther on the obelisk of Heliopolis (the “On” of the Bible, where Moses dwelt) pierces the sky. In front and on either hand, bearing on its bosom the island of Rhoda, where that prophet was found, stretches the sacred Nile, whose green valley rises until it meets at the foot of “Cheops” the sands of the desert, stretching westward, wave on wave, like a frozen ocean, into whose depths the blazing sun is slowly sinking. Away to the southward from “Cheops,” through Memphis to the “False,” stretch the pyramids, those strange sentinels, guarding the dead in their keeping—guarding also the abodes of the living against the ever-encroaching sands of the great Sahara. Lower and lower sinks the sun, fainter and fainter grows the daylight, while the sound of the muezzin’s “Al-la-hu Ak-bar, Al-la-hu Ak-bar,” falls like



From a photograph by Lehnert & Landrock, Tunis  
The Court of the Grand Mosque, Karawan

[illegible]

a benediction. All the world is wrapped in profound repose—buried under the intense silence so peculiar to Egypt. Suddenly the west commences to glimmer with a faint rosy glow, which, ever increasing and deepening, soon covers the heavens with a mantle of crimson, against which the pyramids and palms are sharply silhouetted; desert and Nile seem turned to blood and all Cairo aflame. It is the afterglow, and fades slowly. Then from the wings of night darkness drops like a pall.

“How sad were the sunset,  
Were we not sure of the morrow.”

Shepherd's is gay with light and music when we return. There is a ball on and it will stay on all night.

Those who would be exclusive and draw their garments closely around them for fear of contact with the world at large will go to the Savoy. There you will live the life of London, eat the same stupid formal dinners, and see none save your own sort,—but I do not travel for that. The world, especially the Orient, is a vaudeville where the traveller should be in the heart of things. Shepherd's has always been the heart of Cairo and always will be. It is called “Notoriety” and I should be very careful if I had ladies with me as to whom they met there.

One great change strikes me, and one that does not seem wise or for the better. When here as

a boy in 1873 during the days of Ismail Pasha I met the men of the Egyptian nation, met them socially. I remember many long and pleasant talks with many of them. Now they are absolutely taboo not only by women but by men. An English or American girl would not think of having anything to do with any of them. She would not dare because of instant and unfavourable criticism.

Yesterday Miss P—— came out on to the terrace and found a friend who had lived here for years talking to an Egyptian. After the latter had left, Mr. B—— said to her, "That was a man high in government circles, a most interesting and intelligent person,—you would have enjoyed meeting him, but of course it was impossible." Why?

It would appear that save officially the Egyptians are as completely ostracised as the Eurasians in India, even we men here at the hotel have nothing to do with them. I could not discover that there was any other reason for this save that which holds with the Eurasians, viz., "they are touched with the tar brush," that is, not all Caucasian. Why then does not the same hold with the Japanese?

I remember some years ago the amazement and almost indignation of an English clergyman when I told him that our blacks were not and never could be received socially. He was even surprised that there was not intermarriage, though

vehemently condemning such a thought for an Englishman. The fact that our blacks had always been slaves and servants did not seem to be an objection to him, that is, so far as we were concerned. However, his was an ignorant exception and must be very far from the general opinion in England.

Here with the Egyptians, while I am as opposed as any one could be to intermarriage or very close association, I cannot but wonder whether it is wise to impress upon them that they are looked down upon with contempt. "They are niggers," and that seems to settle it, but again, is it *wise*, is it *politic*?

Be you man or woman, if you associate with any of the Turks or Egyptians in Cairo, you will find you are ostracised and can never regain your place with the whites. We attended a ball at the Gezira pavilion for charity which was honoured by the presence of the Duke and Duchess of Connaught, and it seemed strange that there was not an Egyptian official present. At first it struck one as a mark of discourtesy towards the Duke, but they were doubtless not expected and would scarcely have been admitted had they come. Yet, this is not a conquered race and these people have never been slaves nor are they half-breeds. Certainly conditions are far different from what they were in 1873 and one is forced to ask, Is it necessary or *politic*?

From one standpoint it may be. If it prevents



the production of a race like the Eurasians of India, it will be a blessing. The traveller in that land is struck with pity and abhorrence of those poor people. They are the most unwholesome, disagreeable lot I have ever encountered and seem aware that every man's hand is against them, that they are despised by every one, yet it is not their fault and one cannot but feel sorry for them. Though occupying a like position with the mulattoes in America, the latter are far healthier in appearance, the Eurasians of India being the most unhealthy looking I have ever encountered.

How different that ball from the one I attended in 1873. The one time palace is now a hotel which people call "Impropriety." We did not go near it, but passed along to the pavilion which was quite large enough for the function and which proved to be merely an English dance, exactly like hundreds of other dances and with no more interest attached. Pleasant, doubtless, for those who live here, but of no interest to a traveller, especially one who remembers the splendors of that old ball.

The country is infinitely better off than ever before, but a looker-on cannot but regret the gorgeous days of Ismail the spender. I remember we had been out most of the day on a joyous donkey ride and were returning to the city via the "Shubra" Road, which then was the fashionable drive,—now deserted for that across the

Nile near the race-course. However, this Shubra Road is associated in my mind with one of the most gorgeous scenes of those gorgeous times—scenes and times which ruined Egypt and drove Ismail Pasha for ever from the land. We were returning from the race-course, where all day long we (with thousands of others, “guests of the Khedive,” *all* of us) had been served with wines and dainties worthy of Paris. When I tell you that there were some fifteen thousand “guests” present, you can imagine how that one feast must have cost his royal highness, or rather the poor of Egypt from whom he ground it all.

It was late in the afternoon and we were in haste to return to dinner, and later the great ball in the Palace of the Gezira, given, as were all those fêtes, in honour of the marriage of the Prince Héritier and three of the royal princesses. Shubra Road was crowded, so much so that any advance was impossible; the people were evidently waiting for something, which we soon discovered to be the public display of the wedding presents. Long lines of camels, donkeys, and beautiful Arabian horses approached bearing velvet and satin cushions upon which gleamed diamonds, rubies, emeralds, and every other precious stone known to man made into every sort of ornament; shawls from Kashmir, carpets from Persia and India, presents of gold and silver from every monarch of Europe, until the animals bearing them were almost hidden thereunder. There was enough

useless wealth to put bread in the mouths of all those starving, for they were starving, people that looked on with sullen faces, biding their time. I watched it all until the slanting shadows warned me that I had better be off and attend to that dress coat which I had discovered in the "Mousky," and meant, if it could be made to do, to wear at the royal ball that night. What a coat? My own, which was my first and therefore too valuable to be "packed all over Europe," had been left in London. I had not imagined there could be use for it in barbarous Egypt. However, I meant to go to that ball, and I knew that a pair of dark brown trousers with a white stripe would pass muster in so vast a throng, but that I could not make a brown "frock" pass for a black dress coat, and therefore I had scraped this thing up in a Jew shop in the Mousky. I was tall while it was made for a shorter man, and when "ready" was truly a work of art. Not a button was where it ought to have been, and the patches of dark blue and rusty black used in its reconstruction cast the famous coat of Joseph completely into the shade, and, when combined with the brown and white trousers, formed a picture which daunted—for a time only—even the spirits of a boy of eighteen, especially when the rest of our party kindly suggested that with a few stripes and a star or so I could pass for "Brother Jonathan." We were three hours that night making the short distance from Shepherd's



From a photograph by Lehnert & Landrock, Tunis  
The Interior of the Grand Mosque, Karawan



Hotel to the Palace of the Gezira, so enormous were the crowds. Every few feet of the way was lighted by lanterns held aloft by slaves, who amused themselves now and then by eating the candles, hence the long gaps of darkness. The illuminations were truly Oriental in their splendour, and formed a vast pathway of ever-changing light from the city over the great bridge to the palace, on one side of which, deep in the shadow and guarded by bloodhounds, excited almost to a frenzy by the unusual light and noise, stood the royal harem. On the other side peacefully flowed the sacred river, lighted only by the moon, darkened only, now and then, by the passage of some slave boat with its freight of human misery—the memory of which clouded all the splendour and went with us even to the foot of the throne.

The crowds in the palace represented every nationality. Here a Frenchman with his eyes on every woman in the place, there a beautiful American drifted through the mazes of the waltz, and next her a stately English dame; here a party of Germans discussing the delicious wines and cigars of his highness, while down a long vista of smoke-laden rooms sat solemn-faced Turks each with his nargileh and a pile of gold near him, oblivious of all around, intent only on the game before him. Sounds of barbaric music mingled with the deep baying of the bloodhounds came to us through the open windows, while a deeper,

louder roar was from a young lion but lately added to the private zoölogical garden of the palace.

It was nearly sunrise on a Sunday morning before we reached our hotel, quite weary enough to enjoy a day of "rest," but there was no "day of rest" in Cairo in those days. Fête followed fête, day after day, and for weeks after we had sailed away to Upper Egypt. As we left the hotel on our way to the dahabeah, several of the royal carriages passed, the occupants of which cast handfuls of gold to the people, and as we sailed southward, the palace of the "Kasr-el-Ali" close to the river bank was alive with the glories of another fête, but we had had enough of them and sank with sighs of contentment upon the divans of the boat, while we watched her graceful lateen-sails fill with the north wind, which soon wafted us silently and swiftly away from the sights and sounds of modern Cairo—into the shadowy silence of that old, old land, rendered the more silent and solemn by the very contrast with the splendours behind us.

Few who visited Egypt in the days of 1873 in any way appreciated the pageant of joy and sorrow, light and deepest darkness, which constantly unrolled before their eyes. The land was far more gorgeous in those days than in those of the new century, but it was a land for the rich only, at least a land of pleasure for them alone; for the people, it was one long night of horror. Yet one wonders whether they looked upon it in that



light, wonders whether they would not willingly, at least ungrudgingly, return to that same state, if England left their land to its fate. How long would it be before the Pashas reasserted themselves, returned to their old lives of bloodshed and pillage, and would not the people silently bow their heads and backs, murmuring, "It is the will of Allah, God is great," at the same time considering it all as it should be?—for with these Orientals, force and strength means right and justice, if you are the stronger you have a right to take all you can; it is their misfortune that they are the weaker but it "has been so ordained of Allah." Did any traveller who came here then really appreciate the fact that Egypt was one if not the greatest mouth of the slave trade, that those great barges which passed your gay boat on the sacred river were laden with humanity, as much goods and chattels as your dog, and with not so much a right to their lives? Their black faces were turned toward your floating palace with stolid unthinking expressions, they were packed standing in those barges like posts, and had not left them since they started down the river from the cataract, six hundred miles away. If Ismail wanted some hundreds to work, which he generally did, on his works, he simply sent an order to Khartoum to the sheiks of the land for so many thousands of their people and they came shortly, floating down the river, packed as you saw. Countless perished en route but left the



desired hundreds. It is something to have seen all that, though one thanks God that it is done with for ever.

How gorgeous Cairo was, what a blaze of colour.

Splendid carriages from the royal harems with hideous eunuchs on guard and flying *seis* (footmen) sped along the streets.

*Aida* was performed I remember for its second time one night at the new opera house of the Khedive. We did not miss that, and next came the great ball—already referred to—at the Palace of the Gezira. All the world was there, that is, all the world of the rich,—all the world which then had any right to live. The outer darkness was filled by thousands who stood for hours looking on, but they had then scarce the right to live; certainly no one cared when or how they died or where they were buried. Gordon had not yet appeared on the horizon, and hence as yet no light pierced the blackness of their skies. But he was coming,—the next year, 1874, saw his entrance upon the scene, where he was to die, and where his name was to become immortal—but nine years of his life and nine of his immortality must roll away before Omdurman be fought and his work was done. Be it recorded to the credit of Ismail Pasha—of whom so little good is ever told—that he was always a staunch supporter of General Gordon.

While Cairo has lost much that was Oriental—

which the artist will regret—she is still a most interesting city.

I think no other spot on the globe can show even in these prosaic days such a wonderful, ever-shifting panorama, as that which unrolls itself upon and in front of the terrace of Shepheard's Hotel, and if you would enjoy living in Cairo you will spend most of your time there.

Look now. Yonder comes a procession with much beating of drums, producing that strange monotone one always associates with the cataracts. Three white camels gaily caparisoned bear the musicians, while on a stately white donkey rides an Arab in gorgeous attire, surrounded by his friends and followed by his family in a closed carriage, over which brilliant scarfs are draped. He has just returned from Mecca and therefore emanates sanctity as he passes along.

When you think of pilgrims to Mecca, do your thoughts fly to a far-stretching yellow desert, over which mirages drift and shimmer, with slowly moving caravans of stately camels and lowly donkeys, of hosts of turbaned, swarthy men, of many prayer-rugs and much praying as the sun goes down? If you were here in the Egypt of to-day you might witness the departure or return of many pilgrims, but dismiss for ever the picture your mind's eye has carried since you studied your first geography at your mother's knee, dismiss it or be woefully disappointed.

Yonder comes a Mussulman but just returned, and returning in a *motor car*. Having much money he is attended by all the pomp of his sect and people. There are inlaid camel chairs, gorgeously dressed torch-bearers, many dancing men, a band, mounted on camels, which keeps up an incessant tom-toming. Still, the pilgrim *is* in a motor car, he would laugh in your face if you asked about camels and donkeys to the tomb of the prophet. He took train to Suez, ship to the port of Mecca, and probably a trolley over the few miles to that sacred city, where he found the shrine of his faith lit by electricity.

Groups of these attendants, more or less gorgeous as the pilgrim's purse may allow, are constantly passing to the railway station, as this is the season for the return of pilgrims.

Here is a poor man, not the least in the sight of his lord because of that. He rides a lowly donkey and wears his festal clothes, and many bright silk scarfs hang from his turban,—but he has no camels, cars, or musicians, simply some friends who hold his hand as he passes onward. A lowly cart follows, holding his wives and children.

While I write a monkey has climbed the railing near me and makes a grab at my pencil, only to receive a swat on the side of the head from his master, which causes him to wildly leap into the air and land on another man's head,—confusion.

Stately donkeys go along about their business,

paying no attention to the fuss in the streets. Venders of post-cards, rugs, embroideries, scarfs, beads, cigarettes, and ostrich plumes shout the merits of their merchandise into one's ear.

Here comes a stately Armenian funeral. Black-robed priests lead the way, and the dead rests on a majestic catafalque. Yonder is an Arab one, with the sleeper borne head first in an open coffin on men's shoulders but with a camel's hair shawl thrown over as a pall. Following are some Arab carts closely packed with veiled women, supposedly the wives of the departed, though it is said that many are borrowed for the occasion that he may have an impressive departure from this world of sin straight to the bosom of Mohammed.

As they pass the air is shivered into atoms by that strange, weird cry of mourning which one may hear in Ireland in the keening for the dead.

It has been suggested that some of these funerals are fakes gotten up by Cook & Son to retain Cairo's prestige as an Oriental city.

Here comes that dancing monkey again; grabbing my stick he is off and I don't get it back until a half a piastre changes from my hand to his cold little paw. He has come to know me well—tramps are apt to become easily acquainted—and I declare winks in a most wicked fashion when we meet on the promenade, when he generally turns a back somersault. He is the only monkey which has impressed upon me the fact

that he is naked—walking upright and holding his master's hand he lounges towards one like a Bond Street dude and I cannot but feel that he should be run in for outraging public decency.

One is apt to meet all sorts of people on the terrace at Shepheard's. It is, in fact, the last place on earth where one should meet strangers, especially if one is a young girl, yet it's the place of all others where that is apt to happen most frequently, happen before you can raise hand to prevent it. I should never bring a young girl to Egypt. You cannot keep her from making these most undesirable acquaintances, which it is most difficult to cast off; especially are they in evidence in *all* the hotels on the occasion of the dances. These same dances last all night and seven in the morning has found the dancers still in motion in the grill-room. As I have stated, men and women of all classes flock to them.

The Savoy prides itself upon being more select, but they are there all the same, plenty of them.

Two most accomplished rogues have just departed hastily from here, most attractive men, charming in manners and decidedly retiring, the last persons one would ever pick out for what they undoubtedly were. They brought a high powered and expensive motor with them. As there are no roads in Egypt save one to the pyramids seven miles off on one side and one to Heliopolis as far on the other, there would seem but little use for a motor, but that red car was on the rush all the

time; one trip being over the sands to Suez, when, without guard or chauffeur, the party got lost and spent the night in the desert, keeping awake all the time for several reasons, cold and wild beasts being among them. The two men suddenly disappeared and all sorts of tales abounded concerning them. I cannot see what their game could have been in Cairo. I did not hear of their having approached any one in the matter of cards or games of chance. They appeared intent upon a good time, but no more so than hundreds around them. However, they vanished one morning, motor and all, like the mists before the sun.

Just now I met a young man returning from a long drive which he had taken with "a most charming fellow" whom he had met on the terrace. They drove every place and saw everything and enjoyed every moment, the stranger acting as guide. The young American said as he entered the lift, "Was n't it nice of him? When I got back I missed my watch and chain,"—which appreciation of the situation shows that the American was not such a fool as he seemed.

There is also here a funny little man who reminds one of old Flintwitch in Dickens's *Little Dorrit*. His cravat is usually roving under his left ear. He looks like a guinea-pig on its hind legs and moves as said pig would do in such a position, that is, shuffles. We call him "Fifteen minutes" because he takes forty drinks per day,

a day of twelve hours, hence unless he doubles up he must take one every fifteen minutes. This he does as regularly as clock-work, except that on ball nights, being unable to pass the great rotunda where the dance goes on, he makes a detour around by the long side hall and is therefore sometimes late, the only effect being that he has no rest between times, but keeps constantly on the move. He drinks nothing but sherry, of which he consumes nine dollars' worth per day. He was always the last thing one saw on going to bed and when we left in the early morning he was already returning from his first drink. I shall always think of him as drifting through the shadowy corridors of the hotel, much as that dead man must be drifting far down in the darkness of the Red Sea.



## CHAPTER IX

A Dust-Storm—A Dinner in the Citadel—"The King, God Bless Him"—Anderson Bey—An Interesting Afternoon—Useless Slaughter of Game—Return of the Holy Carpet from Mecca—Contrasts in Life—Departure from Egypt.

SUDDENLY while we were at luncheon to-day a yellow gloom descended upon the world without. The windows appeared fitted with yellow glass and we rubbed our eyes to see what was the matter, and then adjourned en masse to the terrace, our great opera box.

All the world had changed, the streets usually so full of merry crowds were deserted and silent as a tomb, whilst the heavens above us were filled with a golden glow, but the air was as still as death. The atmospheric effects were most gorgeous, all the houses and trees, all life animate and inanimate, was as though powdered in gold dust, and even as we watched arose the sobbing and sighing of winds, winds from far off, from the recesses of the farther deserts, and instantly we were in the midst of a howling sand-storm, and fled indoors half stifled—not that an escape was effected by that move, for the dust penetrated cracks and crannies and soon filled all the house,

getting into our hair and lungs, penetrating trunks and closets. I tried to take a nap, and felt strangled. It was the most wonderful and the most uncomfortable storm I have ever been in, and I do not believe I could have survived it in the desert, where, in fact, so many do lose their lives in just such storms. However, it was worth enduring for that glimpse of the world in gold.

The storm passing we were in due time dug out—so to speak—and enabled to bathe and dress for dinner. It's not so easy to go out to dine in Cairo, at least in certain quarters. To-night, due at the citadel at eight for dinner in the officers' mess, I had ordered a taxicab, but when the time to start came, the chauffeur absolutely refused to climb the hill, he would take me to the foot where I might find a cab. It was "Hobson's choice" and I took it only to find a cab which also refused to climb the hill, but Egypt's reliance, the ubiquitous donkey, was on hand, or rather on foot, and so ready to one's use that when I stepped from the car on the dark side, I slid aboard a donkey before I knew what was happening and found myself flying up the hill and with a certainty of getting where I wanted to go. A most undignified appearance, doubtless, as full dress when aboard a donkey is not elegant to say the least. One stirrup being inches shorter than the other I was obliged to discard both and strike a balance. I am ashamed to say that rounding curves and corners and brushing against camels, I held



From a photograph by Geiser

Formations at Hamma, Meskoutine



wildly to the pummel, but even in my flight I could not but be impressed with the picturesqueness of the scene.

The old Arab city lay asleep in the moonlight; to my right the ancient mosque of Sultan Hassan cast sharp shadows athwart the square, while under its portals some white turbaned figures were bowing their adulations towards Mecca. In front twisted the lanes of the city, bounded by long blank walls, with here and there a jalousied casement breaking the monotony. What does not go on back of those walls? I fancy one would never again be heard of, having entered there, and would promptly drop backwards through the flying centuries to the fifteenth. We are in the twentieth out here, but it would be the fifteenth just inside there, at least you would never come out to tell the tale, and so I do not enter, but urge the donkey onward as I glance upward to where the mosque of Mohammed Ali gleams white in the moonlight, its delicate minarets piercing far upward into the blue dome of heaven.

But I have little time to contemplate all that. It would almost seem that it was the donkey bound for his dinner, and not myself, such is our wild flight through the silent city, through dark streets and frowning gateways, where the challenge of the sentinel meets with no response, under the walls of the mosque itself, and finally shot off at a flight of stone steps, much the worse for the journey, for which how-

ever I pay generously and donkey and donkey-boy trot away contentedly, while I mount the stairs to the dinner of the Dublin Fusiliers.

There are not many here to-night. Most of the officers are out in the desert, manœuvring their men if they are not all buried by the howling sand-storm, but last week the mess-room was crowded and the long table laden with beautiful silver, lighted with many wax lights in stately candelabras, and surrounded by the officers in scarlet mess-jackets presented a beautiful appearance.

Dinner is well over when the call, "Gentlemen, the King" brought all to their feet and while the regimental band outside played the national anthem we drank to the health of his Majesty of England—for the good of his people may his reign be a long one. It will certainly be a sad day for England when it closes.<sup>1</sup> These halls in this ancient citadel are all very spacious and lofty. If this were a European fortress it would be honeycombed with secret passages and dungeons, but I am told such is not the case. Its former masters did not consider it necessary to waste space on their prisoners but simply impaled or hanged them from the battlements. Few travellers who come here ever see any portion of the citadel except the great mosque of Mohammed Ali, which occupies its most elevated point. The

<sup>1</sup> As this goes to press comes the news of the death of King Edward. All the nations sympathise with Great Britain, and none more sincerely than America.

palace or fortress circles the hill below it and of this one catches glimpses as one mounts through the several portals. All are protected by heavy double sets of gates above which the many jalousied windows now generally frame some scarlet-coated English officers, the brilliant colour in marked contrast to the yellow walls and deep blue sky.

Yesterday we visited Anderson Bey, who came up on the ship with us from Suez. The poor man was thrown from his carriage en route from the station and sustained a severe kick from a passing horse so that we found him stretched on a couch. His quarters are in a part of the citadel far distant from those of the Fusiliers. We entered the fortress by the main portal and wound upward for some distance between high blank walls with no break in them except a few loop-holes. The way ended in a cul-de-sac where an attacking party would be absolutely at the mercy of the besieged. Of course the entire fortress is as nothing when modern artillery is considered. We found Major Anderson, or Anderson Bey as he is called, established in luxurious and most interesting quarters, made so by his hundreds of trophies from the hunting field.

I am not a sportsman. While it is to me delightful to follow the hounds, I am always pleased when the fox gets away. With great game I should like to be able to watch their habits and always envied that naturalist who spent some time in an iron cage in the jungles of Africa, but



the desire for slaughter for slaughter's sake is strange to me. It is necessary for food at times and was justified when the animal kingdom of these far-off lands was unknown to our world, but when for instance a splendid specimen of the fast-vanishing giraffe is killed—simply for the sake of having done so or of having one's name emblazoned on the brass plate which marks the stuffed animals in some museum—that should be made a criminal offence. This scarcely holds with the collection, or collector, of the specimens we have just inspected. They are all of small game of which there seems little danger of extinction, and if I remember correctly there was but one specimen of each and the instruction we received from the owner was of great value and interest. There was no bombast about him nor do I remember that his name was “emblazoned upon any brass plate.”

I think I have never met any one so well informed on almost every topic as Major Anderson and especially upon those relating to this section of the world. As we moved from object to object he described each and every one so instructively that several hours passed before we knew it. Each set of antlers—and there were many of them—received an interesting account of their capture—every skin or bundle of spears had its story, until one seemed to live far-off in the forest and desert of the distant Sudan. The meeting with men of this sort forms the charm of world travel. Those hours in the citadel were red-letter

ones for us, to be followed by a morning of equal interest but far different in kind.

To-day the Holy Carpet returns from Mecca, and will be received by the Khedive in the square below the citadel. It is the only day and ceremony during the year in which he reigns supreme. Not an English flag or soldier will be seen, though you will find that many of the officers are from the British army, "loaned by the King."

There are some seventy carriages ordered at Shepherd's alone, and it behooves us to move early in order that we may find a good point of vantage. Eight o'clock finds us en route through the streets, already teeming with a merry multitude from all parts of the world.

As we pass the numerous mosques, the steps are black with women who have sat there all night. At the far end of the street of Mohammed Ali, the great mosque of the citadel rears its minarets and atop and beyond the mountains of Moukatam gleam yellow in the sunlight. The square below the citadel has been roped off into sections, into one of which we are directed and where we are fortunate enough to secure a place close to the way down which the procession must pass. Back of us the walls of the fortress frown down on the passing show, and at the same time keep off the rays of the sun, though at this hour they would be welcome, as it is cold.

To our right clusters a group of mosques, and

below them myriads of the people in their picturesque costumes are gathered.

A grand-stand faces us occupied by diplomats and others who will not have half as good a view as ourselves. Beyond all stretches the Oriental city, a mass of flat roofs and graceful minarets.

Here comes the army marching to European music. There are the Lancers in blue and white and a very smart regiment in khaki with the scarlet tarbóosh. Here are some stately sheiks of the desert in heavy cloth gowns and brilliant turbans: yonder is one in a robe of plum colour over apple green. His red turban is wound in white with a band of gold around it, while pointed yellow slippers show beneath the robe. He has a far-off expression like an eagle, as though all this were littleness, and he moves as stately as a drifting cloud. Now pass some flying *seis* (white-robed runners) before a carriage from the royal harem which holds the Khedive's mother. The place is all aglow and glitter, even the dust sparkles. In a momentary pause the voice of a muezzin, far up in a minaret, calls the faithful to prayer, a summons neglected for once as here comes his royal highness, the Khedive. Heralded by some mounted soldiers and the royal salute, he rides in a superb barouche drawn by four splendid bays in gorgeous harness with scarlet and gold on his coachmen and footmen, two of the latter standing behind the carriage. One has a good look at his face, and finds it good to



From a photograph by Geiser

The Gorge at El Kantarah



look at, a pleasant, open countenance of a man of some forty years of age, dressed in uniform and wearing many orders and a tarbóosh, scarlet, of course, as are all tarbóosh. There are other men in the carriage but they pass unnoticed.

While we are gazing at all his splendour, I glance downward and, clinging to the steps of our carriage, is a most appalling leper, a terrible, awful sight. Such are the contrasts in the Orient. Splendour on the one hand, horrors on the other, until one wonders whether those in the latter state can believe in a merciful God, the same as those in the former.

Even as I turn shudderingly away from the poor wretch, the air is shivered with barbaric music and the holy procession approaches. Men on foot in fantastic garbs of brilliant colour lead a stately camel of gigantic size, especially selected for the great honour. Over his head nods a pompon. Head and neck are completely covered by gold brocade and he bears a towering pagoda of gilt and red velvet encrusted with embroideries. Therein is the Sacred Carpet. Some half a dozen other camels follow bearing the musicians.

The procession is not large, but very effective. It passes round the square formed by the soldiers, and pausing a moment before the Khedive, moves off and away into the city where the carpet will be divided and distributed as relics amongst the many mosques.

Then the Khedive departs followed by his army,

the dust grows thicker, and the sun hotter, and we are glad to escape into the shadowy streets, leaving the square to silence and a blue sky far up in which some vultures float motionless.

No matter how great the crowd in the Orient everything moves with a rush in her cities. You must go into the desert if you would find it otherwise. Certainly to-day it is a wild rush citywards. The rattle and noise is tremendous and suddenly high above it all wails the strange cry for the dead, as some poor mortal, poor in every sense of the word, is borne past us.

For the last time we mingle with the gay crowds on Shepheard's terrace, especially brilliant to-day with many officers in bright colours. The hours pass and the day ends. To-morrow we go forth and onward.

I always leave Egypt with regret, and have no sooner done so than I plan to get back again. I live in hopes of another winter on her Sacred River—not in a steamboat, not roaring and rushing along, but, as of old, in a dahabeah, drifting and dreaming, going when, where, and how we desire, and drinking to the full the enchantment that comes with that life of silence, day after day, week after week, until you dream of the lotus, see the lotus, and, “in this hollow lotus land, live and lie reclined.” Nowhere else in this wide world does one so enter into and become a part of the long dead past, and centuries seem but as yesterday. Now and then you awaken with



a feeling of rebellion against the terrible and inevitable forgetfulness of time. These slowly rolling years are so surely taking you with them to be in a little while carried away and no more seen—forgotten utterly—even as these ancient Egyptians. “Earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust back to dust.” Especially in the presence of these stately ruins does your little span of life appear less than nothing. Thousands of years will find them as they now are, while you—what and where? Surely nothing but a firm belief in the Christian religion enables one for an instant to face that question, yet that God and that religion does enable you to look it all calmly and quietly in the face. “I go to prepare a place for you, that where I am, there ye may be also.”

We start at an early hour but even as the wheels turn are planning to come back. I have accomplished that wish about every twenty years, but cannot hope to do so many more periods. Alexandria soon comes into view and we are shortly aboard a little ship bound for Malta. Fortunately the sea is calm and the voyage a pleasant one, and in three days we anchor in the picturesque harbour of Valetta, where the Orient drops away and we are at once in the Middle Ages. It was not expected that we would land until morning, but as the ship goes on at sunrise we are forced to do so. It is no easy matter rousing the customs, the hackmen, or the hotel, but it's done at last and we rest for a season.

## CHAPTER X

Arrival in Tunisia—History—First Glimpse of Carthage—City of Tunis—Old Friends—The Road to Carthage and its Ruins—The Ancient City—St. Louis the King—Engaging a Motor—The Run to Kārawân—Tunisian Meadows and Flowers—The Holy City of Kārawân—Its Mosques, History, and Legends—The Gate of Green Gages—Moors' Entrance into Spain.

A SEA of purple splendour, a fair blue sky made rosy by the coming of day, dark mountains brooding in the distance, while the middle foreground holds a green cape upon which, close over the water, nestles a white Moorish town, with its minarets and balloon-shaped domes, which seem about to float away in the still air. Beyond this, on a lower promontory, green also, rise the walls of a cathedral to the living God. A few ruined arches encompass it; all the surrounding space far inland is empty. Yet there, once stood the stately city of Carthage. Where the cathedral now stands was the citadel of Dido, gone now so completely; yet one naturally re-peoples the spaces and rebuilds the city in one's mind's eye. Miles of stately white palaces where now the grass grows, thousands and tens of thousands and hundreds of thousands of people make the

scene a busy one. Where now a few donkey-boys drive their patient little beasts the elephants of Hannibal's hosts trumpeted out their impatience to start on their long march to Rome, westward until the Pillars of Hercules rose from the sea, northward until the Pyrenees were past, onward through Gaul and southward over the Alps and Apennines, until Rome stood before them. Then the tide turned and ebbed and ebbed with defeat in every wave until suicide ended the drama.

There are no boats plying between the Pillars of Hercules now which would transport an elephant. What means had the African General back in those dim ages? But the march from Carthage was long and weary before the question had to be solved.

As the traveller of to-day wanders over the plains and mountains of Tunisia, he is impressed at almost every step with the memory of the magnificence of her past, that is, her Roman past, for he cannot travel any distance without coming across some evidence of a town or building whose extent or solidity has left marked traces. This holds here much more than in Italy, Rome itself not excepted, for the ruins of Timgad alone are more magnificent and extensive than anything Rome can show, with the one exception of the Coliseum.

Other towns in Tunisia hold arenas almost equal in size and magnificence to that of Rome.

When the reign of the Imperial City passed

away, came the power, piracy, and decay of the Mohammedan period, reducing Tunisia to what France found it in 1881. Now she is forging forward. Though to-day the Bey is still nominally the ruler, he is merely a figurehead, used by France as a more convenient method of governing the province than the laws of France would offer.

When France wanted the province she simply took it and allowed the Bey two hours in which to consider a treaty he already knew he would have to sign, a treaty which constituted the representatives of France as the sole medium of communication between himself and his subjects, and they are all, Bey included, very much the happier in consequence. Still, at first all was not smooth sailing. The Mohammedans were stirred up and a general revolt against the Bey ensued, ending in the conquest by France, which was not accomplished until an immense army was sent over which conquered the land, city by city, until with the fall of the holy Kārawân, the end was accomplished, and to-day Tunisia moves onward in the paths of peace and progress.

That she is so moving is impressed upon us as our ship, having left Carthage behind, slowly steams up the canal and comes to rest in the modern city of Tunis.

I visited here in 1891 and find great improvements made in the place during those years. She was then a sleepy old town with little evidence of progress, while to-day her streets and wharves



From a photograph by Geiser

The Park at Biskra





hum with the life of a growing city. Ships from all quarters of the world touch at her port. Her streets, well paved and lighted, are bordered by rows of fine buildings and we lodge at as comfortable an hotel as one could wish for.

The Arab quarters have changed but little, and one finds on the other side of the "Port de France" as attractive an Oriental city as one could wish for, and one will spend many hours in the shadowy bazars and perfume-laden shops.

I find, still sitting in the spot where I left him nearly twenty years ago, a stately old Arab who declares that he remembers me well, and welcomes me as a long-absent brother, resulting, of course, to his credit and my loss, as to cash, for one *must* buy from a brother who has not seen one for twenty years. However, I rebel when almost every other old chap, in all the booths down which the news has spread like lightning, welcomes me also like a brother. Those incidents form much of the pleasure of Oriental travel. In my mind's eye I can see a network of "brothers" covering most of this world, and I doubt not that there are many waiting for me, no matter to which world I may be sent hereafter.

As we leave one shop an old Marabout, who is both saint and gossip, follows us first with many blessings in view of possible cash and then with a shower of maledictions, upon us and our ancestors and descendants to the most remote degree, when the cash is not forthcoming. "All right,



old man, if your heaven holds many as dirtily disreputable as yourself, we don't want to go there, hence you need not bar the door."

As we move outward on the carriage road to Carthage we pass the Jewish cemetery, a vast field full of great flat tombstones, and each one occupied by a group of Jewish women. Over their brilliant dresses they wear long white mantles which, falling from horn-like projections affixed to the forehead, enshroud the entire figure, so that the wearers as they sit with heads closely together look like a lot of Ku-Klux, and it is said that all the gossip and scandal of the Jewish section of Tunis originates in that field of the dead. I think I know some at home, who, having made such the business of their lives, would like to be buried here where they could at least listen and chuckle in ghoulish glee;—but let us pass on.

The road to Carthage winds along the shores of the bay, until we find ourselves in front of the cathedral; Cardinal Lavigerie's cherished desire is accomplished in this church and he, who did so much for Tunisia, sleeps within its walls.

This hill was the site of the Byrsa or citadel of Carthage, but to-day as we gaze around and away not a vestige of the ancient city remains, though even up to the time of St. Louis there were many buildings still intact, and Carthage was yet a city. But the followers of the prophet have blotted it out.

St. Louis the King died here on August 25, 1270.

Just beyond stood the palace of Dido, whose walls are still there underground, and from there, if she *was* burned, that queen might have witnessed the departure of the Trojans.

As we wander over the adjoining country, we are impressed with the fact that there is an immense and rich field here for the archæologist. The time may yet come when, like Timgad, Carthage will stand revealed to us. Even as it is, there has of late years been uncovered much of interest; all in ruins, of course, but still of interest.

The thieves of Europe and vandals of the prophet have done all they could here, and modern Tunis is built from ancient Carthage, and still there is doubtless much of great interest and value under these daisies and almond trees in such beautiful bloom to-day.

It's worth while dying in North Africa just to be buried under an almond tree.

As we leave the spot where the King died we pause a while in the museum the monks have collected around it,—a vast collection of fragments, capitals, columns, inscriptions, etc., but I find myself pausing longest over an ancient sarcophagus in which, what once was a man, like myself, gazes up at us from empty eyes and across all the centuries between now and then. He saw it all, perhaps may have even known Dido. Certainly he was one of importance to have

been buried in this carven tomb, yet there is no inscription and we know not who he was. What would he have said could he have been told that, as he lay dying, perhaps in the palace itself, whose very site is now a matter of discussion?

“Gather your roses while you may.”

If you are interested in so doing, you may easily discover the ancient ports of Carthage. We passed their sites as we entered by Goletta from the sea. What funny little places they would appear to our modern eyes,—the *Mauretania* would cover them both and have room to spare for a few Roman ships on her deck. They were artificial basins and to one of our day present the appearance of a railway round-house with their amphitheatre-like structure into the cells of which the galleys—little if any larger than a locomotive—were backed for the night. Two hundred and twenty could be accommodated while above were naval store-houses.

The admiral lived on the island in the centre (see illustration) from whence were trumpeted his orders.

There was another port for merchantmen but those entering there could not spy upon the naval station as heavy walls cut off their view—so much for the navy. The army appears to have found quarters in the walls of the city. There appears to have been but one wall—to the south

of the city—and there stood the citadel—called Byrsa. This was enclosed in a triple wall of thirty cubits high, not counting the highest of the parapets and towers which were four stories in height and with foundations extending down thirty feet—the walls reaching only to the second story. The whole was vaulted and so vastly that there were stalls for three hundred elephants, while above were stabled four thousand horses, and lodgings for twenty thousand footmen and four thousand horsemen. The entire army was in these walls.

One "Dreadnought" of to-day could have taken ancient Carthage in a few hours. Does the future hold engines and implements of war so formidable that those of to-day will then appear as insignificant as those of Carthage do to us? Doubtless, for the air is the future battle-field.

There is nothing left of the Byrsa-citadel—which was also the palace—that is, nothing above ground, though excavations might turn up much of interest. In the illustration it is the square-towered structure in the right-hand lower corner. It was built of Numidian marble mottled with yellow and rose, in four terraces like stories. There were straight staircases of massive ebony bearing at the angles the prows of vanquished galleys. There was a brazen trellis to protect from scorpions and a lattice of gilded bars enclosed its apertures above—the whole solemn and gloomy. The magnificent *Via Cœlestis* stretched

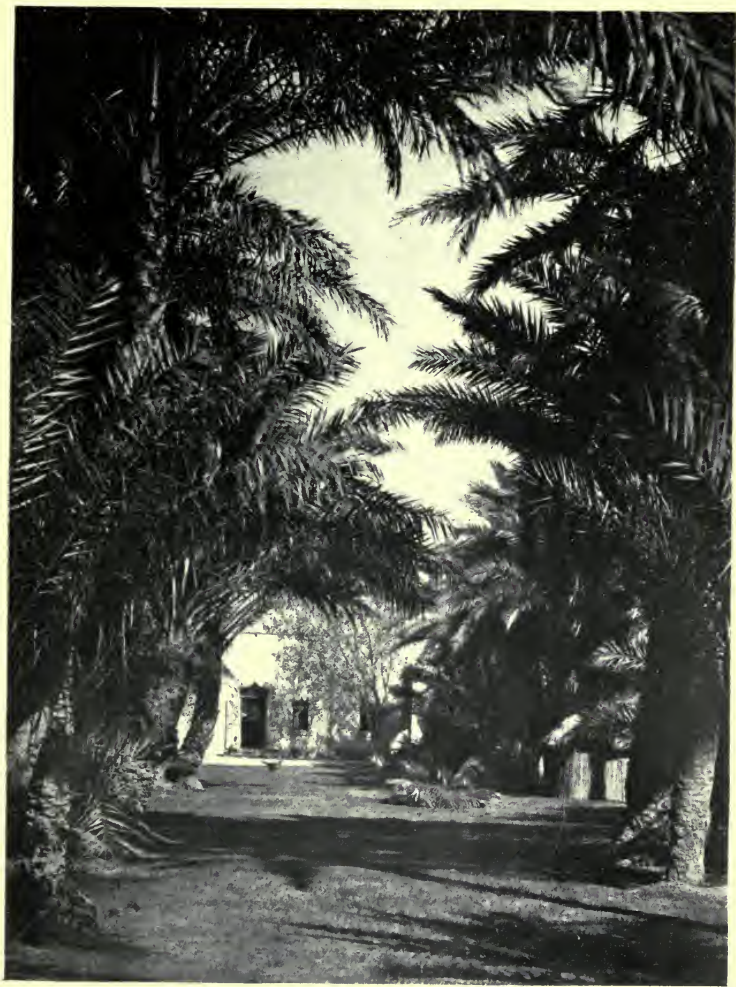
away from it for two miles. Its decorated walls were adorned with mosaics and precious stones. How much of this was extant when St. Louis died?—strange that the last we hear of Carthage as a city is when that crusade ended and the gentle King yielded his soul to God.

Leaving the ancient city, we pass onward to the village of Sidi-Bou-Saeed, holy to the Arabs, who claim that here St. Louis was buried, after having been converted to Islamism.

The town is the white village one sees first from the sea, and is perched high up over its gleaming waters.

Our motor puffs and groans as it climbs the steep ascent, landing us finally at the lighthouse, whose steady flame by night is of greater benefit to his people than the torch of the prophet ever was. Our return route to Tunis passes the ancient cisterns of Carthage, still in use and most useful to the surrounding villages. Not far beyond are the ruins of the theatre—and most completely ruined it has been—one or two high columns and the seats alone remain to testify to its former grandeur and size.

In Tunis we find a very complete garage in connection with the hotel, and are shortly in possession for the tour, as it turns out, not only of Tunisia and Algeria, but Spain and Southern France, of a large, dark red, Daracq motor, and well it served us throughout all the thousands of miles, never being out of commission for more than



From a photograph by Geiser  
In the Park of "The Garden of Allah"







an hour or two, and it was with sincere regret that we saw it finally roll off at Arles and vanish around a corner on its run to Marseilles, where it embarked for Tunis,—but that is months ahead, so let us return to the day we engaged it. The agreement is—and I give it here for the sake of those who may desire to do as we did—for two weeks to Biskra and Algiers, 2500 francs, the car to be discharged at Algiers. For three weeks, to Biskra, Algiers, and Oran, 3000 francs and the discharge to take place there. We do not have to pay for its return to Tunis. This makes it more expensive than in France where I had cars several times for \$20 a day, everything included except the board and lodging of the chauffeur, which was not included in this Tunisian engagement.

The ancient and—after Mecca—most holy city of Kārawân lies to the south-west of Tunis, some one hundred and thirty-two miles distant. We shall visit it before starting on the long tour westward, making a leisurely start about nine, in order to lunch at Sousse, one hundred and fifty kilos, and have the afternoon for Kārawân.

The motor rolls round on a misty morning, and we are shortly ensconced and gliding off through the streets of Tunis. The route lies around the bay which gleams pale green and opaline against the dark mountains beyond. All the land is blushing into life, the delicate green of meadows is frosted white with daisies, and yonder golden

splotched with buttercups, while plum and pear and almond trees wave garlands of pink and white in the fresh morning air.

Given a morning in spring here in Tunisia, and the good God has nothing more beautiful to bestow upon man. The world is young and full of life, and life seems full of hope and worth the living.

As we roll away down highroads which to my amazement are superb, our rushing car does not disturb donkeys and comfortably fat Irish ladies, nor chickens and geese as in France, but trains of stately camels and white-robed Moors. All stare in grand amaze for a moment and then the camels pick up their skirts—so to speak—like an old maid from New England and skip away as she would do when attacked by a cow, but the white-robed Moors scarcely deign to move aside for our rushing infidel invention, and the glances they do bestow upon it and us would bode ill for both were the power there to enforce their wish, but it is not. The strong arm of France protects us, as yonder soldier in scarlet indicates.

Suddenly in a bend of the road we are in the midst of a flock of sheep, all brown and white, driven by numerous boys, all brown and white, the former as to fleece, the latter as to clothing, or I should say draperies, for what they wear is not "clothing" in our sense of that word; but be that as it may, the picture before us is worthy the brush of a great painter,—the brown and white

sheep and brown and white boys, all huddled together against a fair green meadow daisy spangled, while behind rise the blue hills to a bluer heaven, over which white clouds are dancing in the cool fresh air of morning.

Soon the sea is nearer to us and we rush and sail and skim along its shore over pebbly beaches and murmuring waves, until Sousse is reached, lunch eaten, and we are off once more for the sacred city.

A vast green plain is crossed and inter-crossed by hedges of prickly pear, with here and there a grove of trees gnarled and twisted with an age so great that they may have stood here when the Nazarene knelt in agony under like trees in Palestine. Blooming beds of asphodels and golden furze splotch the nearer foreground. Palm trees, and apple and almond, and the dainty peach stand grouped all around, while far over the green plains, with the sun throwing shafts of golden light upon it and guarded by one stately giralda, sparkles a white domed city, with dark mountains brooding behind it, Kārawân the holy. The prospect as we near its walls is fair indeed. Will the interest abide when we pass them or vanish as it so often does in the Orient? It appears almost to rest under some spell of enchantment, so profound is the silence which enfolds it. No signs of life appear in all the land around it, no murmur of human existence until we are well under its walls. I can scarcely realise that we may and

shall enter this city of Kārawân, for Kārawân is, next to Mecca, the most sacred city of Islam and pilgrimages here are counted next in saving grace to those to the latter city.

Passing onward around the outer walls we pause for inspection at several of the mosques before entering the city. The most interesting because of its beautiful tiling, of which there is a large quantity both in the mosque proper and in the adjoining arcades, is that of the Barber Abdallah.

This mosque, the Djemaät es Sehebi, is considered the most important building of Kārawân. It is not generally believed that Abdallah was really the barber of the prophet, but rather his companion; the legend arose from his having been buried with three hairs from the prophet's beard, one under his tongue, one on his right arm, and the third next his heart.

One passes through several courts, all decorated in beautiful blue tiling, with roofs and arcades supported by delicate marble columns, before entering the mosque, where sleeps the saint. His catafalque bears a black velvet pall, heavily embroidered in gold and surrounded by a high gilded railing. Our feet sink into beautiful rugs and the light filters softly downward through small windows of coloured glass. Small lamps of silver and ostrich eggs hang around everywhere. A profound peace reigns supreme, broken only, or rather intensified, by the voice of a student

droning the Koran from a cell in the adjoining cloisters.

Just outside the door as we leave a muezzin commences his mournful summons to prayer.

Times must be changed over all the Orient. I noticed in Egypt but one muezzin up on the minarets, one stood on the steps of the mosque of Sultan Hassan, and this one is in an inner court, while the white tower of the mosque rises untenanted above him, and the outer world is none the more religiously inclined for the call, which is addressed to empty walls, saving our presence, of which he seems unconscious. I have never before been so near one, and watch and listen with interest. He stands under an archway and with closed eyes gives utterance to that long wailing cry of his religion, the first chapter of the Koran, answered to-day by the cry of a solitary dog.

"In the name of Allah, the merciful, the compassionate!  
Praise be to Allah, Sovereign of all worlds,  
Who giveth Mercy,  
The King of the day of Faith.  
Thee Lord, we worship, of Thee we implore help,  
Guide us into the path of salvation,  
The path of those for whom Thy loving mercy is great,  
Of those who have not deserved Thy wrath, nor  
deviated from the way.  
Amin, O Lord of Angels, Djinns, and Men."

As his voice dies away his head sinks upon his breast and his countenance indicates—what?

I have long since realised that it is impossible to determine what feelings or thoughts are hidden behind the masque-like faces of the Orient but here the question arises too strongly to be ignored. Is it profound religious reverie or deepest despair at the passing of his faith?—for passing it must be when the unbeliever can safely stand in a mosque in holy Kärawân.

So we leave him, and moving round the outer walls we come upon a quaint structure built, strangely to relate, in the form of a cross, and surmounted by seven cupolas,—the Mosque of the Sword, so called because of several huge wooden swords which stand around the tomb of its founder, who appears noted for nothing save their construction.

The structure is quaint, but very crude, and with the great mosque still to be visited, we do not spend much time there, but enter the city by the "Gate of the Green Gages" and are at once in the midst of an Oriental market. While I fear if one understood what is said one would not feel complimented still there is no overt act of hostility, only curiosity is expressed, more about our motor than ourselves, and it was a queer sight, that juxtaposition of epochs. All around the square rose the white buildings of the Oriental city, with the market in the centre, the whole exactly as it has been for twelve hundred years, while under the archway of the Gate of Green Gages puffed our red motor. For a mo-





The Great Sahara





ment, our power being shut off, there is absolute silence. All the bubbling noises of the city are, as it were by magic, stopped. The whole is like a picture or the figures of a dream, but the spell passes and save for some few bowed in prayer, life goes on again. Against the white walls camels are silhouetted; the humble donkey is not missing and greets us in the name of his brethren of Khartoum—word having come across the desert. There are the sellers of sweetmeats and soft drinks, and the vendors of tobacco. Yonder is a snake charmer holding aloft a cobra with distended hood. Here, nearer, are the sellers of carpets with their goods over their shoulders, heaps of fodder piled on the ground, baskets of red chilles, paniers of vegetables, pottery from Naples, white-robed Arabs from the plains with goats for sale, city dandies in robes of purple or blue over white, with golden turbans and yellow pointed slippers, pacing majestically about.

Kärawân like Bokhara is the Orient pure and simple, unadulterated by any contact with the outer world, and this twentieth century holds few such. Bokhara, Samark and, Fez, and Lhasa are, with Mecca and Kärawân, almost all that are so, unless one may add Medina, which I have never heard described by any traveller.

Of all those, this, save Mecca, is the holiest, and yet we enter its streets and mosques to-day, and its people do not appear antagonistic. These Moors are, of all the Moslem world, the most

stately; perhaps it is owing to their white robes and burnouses. Certainly their white city forms here a most charming and attractive background for their artistic, stately figures.

Yonder comes a man of splendid stature. A regular countenance, with great black eyes, is crowned by a white turban. His long white gown opens in front over a vestment of moss green, and he wears a cloth of gold around his neck.

The silent and deserted country around the city is explained, for being market-day every Moor is here at trade.

To-day Kārawân is the second city of Tunisia and has 30,000 inhabitants.

Eleven hundred years ago it contained thirty quarters each the size of the present town—a day was necessary to cross the whole. Each child was labeled with name and address in case it became lost. It is claimed that the city measured eighteen miles in every direction and was a square. To-day there is not outside the present walls a vestige of any of this.

In the streets leading to the great mosque are the tombs of many saints and Marabouts,—low, dirty, and neglected, with some greasy flags stuck in the cracks, but amongst them one may find those of the Aghlabites, the conquerors of Sicily, Sardinia, Corsica, and Crete. Here also is the tomb of Schanoun, the great theologian, who died in A.D. 862. As we pass along I doubt not

we are assailed with curses on all sides,—desires that our names be not inscribed in God's great book or that we be stricken with an irritating disease. They do not wish us death, that would be merciful.

However, I think that curiosity is more in evidence than hatred,—the latter will keep but our red motor will disappear shortly and with it our possible backsheesh.

Kärawân is as dirty as all other Mohammedan towns. The people are filthy; while the Koran commands ablutions before prayer, the command does not appear to extend to the cleansing of the hands after they have completed the former, and this is rarely if ever done, hence our dislike to be touched by an Arab. As for their clothing, save for some few here and there, they smell aloud to heaven, and the garments must, like those in China, come down from generation to generation. I remember forbidding my guide in the flowery kingdom to wear a certain kimono.

“But sir, it belonged to my great-grandfather.”

“Exactly,—that is just the reason why I cannot stand it, so take warning.”

In Japan, the so-called cleanly, as here, where dirt is acknowledged, in fact gloried in, I defy any Anglo-Saxon to remain long in a crowd, and every traveller must remember the nasty condition of the Japanese theatres.

There are no theatres amongst these people, a café is the nearest approach to such.

The walls of Kārawân were commenced forty years after the death of Mohammed, or A.D. 672, and completed in ninety-six years. The greatest event of its history came about 714 A.D. Julian the Apostate invited the Arabian Emir to invade Spain. After the return of the warrior Tarik from a voyage of discovery he wrote from Kārawân to the Khalifa of Damascus describing Spain as "a new land spreading itself out for conquest, equalling Syria in fertility and climate, Yemen in temperature, India in fruits and flowers, Cathay in precious minerals, an inheritance ready for the true believer."

"God is great," cried the Khalifa, "and Mohammed is his Prophet," and authorised the conquest.

The rest is the history of Spain.

How beautifully Irving tells it from the landing and burning of their ships throughout all the centuries when under the Moors who started out from this silent old town of Kārawân Spain attained a magnificence never dreamed of since.

Cordova alone, under its seventeen sultans, waxed and waxed until in the eleventh century it held three hundred mosques, nine hundred baths, six hundred caravanseries; philosophers, poets, physicians, chemists, astronomers, mathematicians, engineers, architects flourished amidst its one million inhabitants. Granada held half a million, its palace of the Alhambra was the marvel of the age. So the land grew and prospered

and the tide of conquest swept on into France, until between Tours and Poitiers the Moors met and were defeated by Charles Martel in the most prodigious and solemn battle of history,—a battle lasting seven days; thereafter came the capture of Cordova by St. Ferdinand, and the tide of Mohammedan conquest was turned and from its progress towards a full moon the crescent waned until all that is left of the Moorish invasion of Europe is a few bunches of keys hanging here in Kārawân, keys to the homes abandoned in Spain and which the faithful fully trust to Allah to restore to them, when their destiny becomes fulfilled. But the centuries roll by, Allah appears to have forgotten, and in his holy city the infidel enters without fear, mounting even as we have done to the tower of his most sacred mosque.

Changed indeed are the days in Kārawân. We are protected to-day by the soldier of the same nation which turned the tide at Tours.

The traveller through Spain to-day cannot but wonder whether the re-conquest by Isabella was not more of a curse than a blessing. If that great Queen had allowed her heart and her noble mind to dictate her actions one must believe that she would have been all merciful. Realising that there is good in every one, she would have utilised the Moorish inhabitants for the aggrandisement of her people and country; but under the influence of an ignorant and bigoted priesthood all was changed

and the curtain of night came down over Spain, never to be lifted.

For the Queen be it said that with her it was "better the loss of all than the loss of the soul," and the latter she believed could be saved only through the Roman Church, hence Torquemada, the Inquisition, and the stake, leaving Spain what one sees it to-day. But to return to the history of Kārawân.





From a photograph by Geiser

The 20th Century Confronts 2000 B.C.



## CHAPTER XI

The Building of Kārawân—Hucba—Growth of the City—Its Great Mosque—The French Renegade Sidi Hamet and his Tale—Legends of Kārawân—Okhbah—Treasures from Toledo—Farewell to the City—The City of Sousse.

THIS famous city of Cairaoan—Carven and now—Kārawân—was founded by Hucba, who came with an army from the deserts of Arabia sent by Hutman, the third Mohammedan Khalifa.

Carthage had vanished, the Romans were but a memory. Tunis, the successor of the great city, was the capital of the land, but Hucba insisted that Tunis was too near the sea, and that no army or garrison should be so placed, whereupon he built another city and called it “Cairaoan.”

To Cairaoan came the army from Tunis and many citizens were sent to people the new town situated as the crow flies one hundred miles to the south-west of Tunis and about thirty-six from the sea at Sousse.

For the army and its spoils was Kārawân built and for that alone. Hucba surrounded it with almost impregnable walls and built therein the stately temple which stands perfect to-day. From

over the hills round about it the remains of the Roman occupation look down upon the Saracen city.

Kārawân became the centre for the study of law.

With its destruction all that passed away, the place never regained its ancient importance. To-day it is the dwelling place of none but leather dressers who exchange their goods for European clothes. Its people were, until the French arrived, subject to oppression and misery by the kings of Tunis.

There are endless surmises as to the origin of the name. Dr. Shaw considers it as identical with Karwan or Caravan, a place where Arabs have their rendezvous. In Tripoli the common pronunciation is Keerwân, but in the city itself the educated natives call it Kārawân. Let us take it at that.

The city became the hotbed of the most bigoted of the Mohammedans, their most sacred town, where the Crescent reigned undividedly, into which no minister of the Gospel penetrated for twelve hundred years. It has never been attacked by Christian troops, no Christian, except by special favour, was allowed to enter until within a few years back, and no Jew, so that it has remained pure, as to its contact with any faith save that of its founder, Hucba, or Okhbah. To it, caravans came from all over Africa to breathe in its holy atmosphere and pray in its great mosque, whose

stones are believed by the faithful, even to-day, to have come miraculously and placed themselves in the spots they yet occupy. All of this has retained for it a devotion from the true believers second only to Mecca.

It was not until in the seventies that the Bey of Tunis began to grant permits to enter, and very rarely even at that late date. But that permit did not insure the bearer an entrance; he was halted miles outside the walls while the Governor of the city in solemn conclave with his council considered the permit. If his entrance was granted he was attended by an escort during his stay; his life would have been forfeited otherwise, and in short order. But even the guard did not protect him from insults and he was urged to hasten and not look too closely upon the holy places.

How changed are the days in Kārawân. Our red motor paused but an instant to obtain an unnecessary permit from a German hotel-keeper who gets a fee, and we rolled on, objected to, so far as we could understand, by none.

Inside and next to the city walls is a wide street, down which we run to the great mosque. It stands in the north-east angle of the city, off and apart as though too holy even for the faithful to dwell near unto it. A high level wall flanked by massive buttresses encloses it, pierced by two domed-tower gateways, and the giralda or minar towers majestically above, while the whole is white as driven snow.

To-day one may enter without fear the great courtyard; it is an immense quadrangle with the mosque on one side and the minar facing it across the court. Above the mosque rises the dome of the mihrab or holy niche towards Mecca, while the minar is solid and imposing.

The great mosque is in size almost the equal of the Jumma Musjid of Delhi and its hall of many columns reminds one of Cordova. In fact this is the model from which the Spanish structure was made, but this was hoary with age before a Moor entered Spain. They are vanished for ever from there, but here white-robed figures are worshipping Allah as their ancestors have done for thirteen hundred years.

You will notice here as in all the sections of Africa that the Moors have never built the graceful minarets, the stately minars, or square towers, taking their place. While not so graceful as the former they are more in keeping with Moorish architecture.

The absolute, perfect peace of such a spot is, to an Occidental, most impressive. It is deeper than in our great cathedrals.

We have it to ourselves save for half a dozen slowly pacing figures who pay no sort of attention to us. The resemblance of the mosque at Cordova to this is confirmed upon entering into the forest of pillars.

The Spanish mosque however must have been far grander in its prime, but architecturally it has

been ruined by the introduction of the Christian church in its centre.

Here at Kārawân as one stands at the holy of holies the forest of pillars stretches away unbroken on all sides and before one, until lost in perspective. There is a dim light over the whole and no sound save some murmuring prayers and the fluttering of doves above one.

Such is the shrine of Kārawân, the tomb of its founder, Okhbah ibn Aghlab, and the chosen spot for sepulchre by the kings of Tunis.

One ascends the great tower not by stairs but inclines, as in all the minars here and in Spain. Three people may walk abreast and the journey is not tiresome, so that one arrives at the summit in condition to enjoy the panorama, and the muezzin with voice for his call.

I think this form of tower must have been chosen in preference to the minarets of the farther east for that very reason.

The day is perfect, and having induced our French guide to hold his tongue, we enjoy the wonderous panorama to the full.

Below is spread the city, whose people, shut up for all those centuries, insensible to the progress of the world, have no ambition, curiosity, or enterprise, and little information. On the tops of their white houses, in the midst of their fair green valley, encircled by the brooding purple mountains and watched over by the drifting clouds, they have dreamed on and on, content from generation to



generation; and something of that peace and contentment came down upon us as we entered the portals of this sacred city, even though we were in a motor.

But how can a live mind be contented here? And yet there are those, certainly one, who has deserted the religion of his ancestors, the country of his birth, and coming here has embraced Islamism, never leaving this dead-and-alive city again. He was alive twenty years ago, though now he may have exchanged the death in life for, let us hope, a life in death, and a quieter spot over yonder on the green plains. He was French, though known here as Sidi Hamet, and Rae in his visit here years ago had a talk with him, or rather listened to what he had to say.

“I am a European, French, from Normandy, where my family still live. My father was a banker and I took the degree of Bachelor of Letters in Paris, afterward entering the Monastery of La Trappe, where I lived three years. I was also at La Grande Chartreuse. I cannot describe to you how those years shocked and uprooted my faith in Christianity and Catholicism or how great are the meanness, the hypocrisy, the imposture, of such a system. Sickened and disillusioned with this mockery of religion, I left my country resolving to seek some simpler, purer way to another world.

“I was received at Tunis by the Prime Minister, who himself came from the Greek Church. Under him I adopted the faith of Islam, learned Arabic,



From a photograph by Geiser

Dwellers of the Desert



and was admitted as a Mussulman. I came directly here to Kärâwân and yours is the first European face I have seen.

“Determined to abandon everything that could suggest or recall the past, I became simply and purely a Mussulman. In every respect, outwardly and inwardly, I am that now. I am surrounded by friends who have given me evidences of trust and affection such as I did not believe the Arab minds capable of. My happiness is consulted, and I see around me examples of philosophy and *true* religion,—for the first time in my life I know what true happiness is. I live in the most absolute calm and tranquillity of mind, unruffled by circumstances,—the past is blotted out; all I ask for the present is peace. My life is to me the realisation of practical philosophy. I have nothing to disturb the peace of the mind or the balance of the intellect.

“My conversion was the cause of astonishment to many and each one endeavoured to invent some motive for it. According to one it was the fulfilment of ambition. But where is there room for ambition in Kärâwân? According to another I was attracted by the sensual features of the social life, but I had made a vow of chastity and poverty.” Here he added what rather upsets one’s belief in his “vow.” “Should I be offered a wife I would not refuse one, but I want neither riches nor pleasure. I want the philosophical enjoyment of a quiet spirit.”

“Rae asked him whether he found in the Mussulman faith any higher inspiration than in that of Jesus Christ.

“I do not,—it is in the practice of their faith that the Christians, in my own land at least, fall short as compared with Mussulmans,—the imposing extravagances which have grown up under the auspices of the priesthood in France have rendered the worship of Christ a theatrical mockery. The influence established by ignorant and intriguing men over the minds of their flocks is unjustifiable and the result mere superstition.

“In the Koran there is sufficient to take a man to heaven, if he follows its precepts and his own conscience.”

Rae asked if he had no regret for those he left behind.

“None whatever, nor any interest in that outer world. I will not for anything risk the distraction of my thoughts or the absorbing of my interest. I only ask, should you ever write an account of your travels here, that you will send me a copy of your book.”

As I gaze out over the slumbering city where that man lived and may still be living, I wonder what was the real cause which drove him here,—certainly there was much which he did not tell. He has probably by now carried his secret under some low green tent “whose curtains never outward swing,” this “Renegade of Kārawân.” But to return to the city’s history.

When Okhbah-ibn-Nafi had decided to build it he led his people—among whom were eighteen companions of the prophet—to this spot, then, it is said, in a deep forest.

“What,” they cried, “would you make a city of the heart of a trackless forest, where wild beasts and snakes abound?”

Then he cried aloud, “O ye serpents and savage beasts, know that we are the companions of God’s prophet; withdraw from the spot we have chosen.”

Whereupon the people saw the wonderful sight of an army of fleeing wild beasts and serpents carrying their young. For forty years after neither snake nor scorpion was found here.

Did St. Patrick ever hear of Okhbah? Is there any tradition of the Christian Church which has not its parallel in some other faith?

Marking the site of the city Okhbah made prayers to God for its peace, prosperity, and safety.

This mosque was first constructed, and where to place the Kibleh became a matter of grave consideration, until Okhbah was warned in a dream to take the holy standard and follow a voice which he alone should hear and where it guided there to build the holy of holies. This he did and so the matter was settled and that spot remains sacred to this day. The mosque has been reconstructed many times, but all have spared that holy spot which remains to-day as Okhbah built it. The last work was done more than one

thousand years ago, during which time the structure of the whole has never been touched.

Though Kārawân never was as richly endowed as the Spanish mosques, still its treasures were of great value. Amongst them were twenty-five crowns of the Gothic kings—brought from Toledo—of pure gold and encrusted with jewels. Also from Medina Coeli a table which had formed part of the spoils taken from Rome by Alaric the Goth. It was formed by a single emerald and possessed of talismanic properties and wrought by a genii for King Solomon the wise. There was also a cup of a single pearl from the Temple at Jerusalem. Then from Toledo was brought the table whereat Christ sat with his apostles,—it was covered with pure gold and adorned with precious stones, and was worth half a million of ducats. This also was brought to Kārawân by Musa, but who, I wonder, thought enough of it at the time to preserve it in that chamber without the walls of Jerusalem where those simple fishermen and the Nazarene held that solemn feast? Where was it during the centuries which intervened before its appearance in Toledo and where is it now?

Kārawân is a proof that Moorish prosperity was not real, that it was not founded upon anything which could endure. These Orientals of to-day make no progress, they are as they were in the days of the prophet. One sees none of the magnificence told of in Spain. Therefore, what caused it there? Was it the contact with northern



racés, especially the Jewish? It would so appear.

With the return to Africa the history of this people is steadily downward, every advance they had made in Spain was lost; the pastoral life of the Bible returned. Kārawân endured siege after siege, all the time descending the scale of adversity; despotic sultans ruled over her; murder and torture were her daily portion; crucifixion was common. One ruler, Ibrahim-ibn-Ahmed, having lost his napkin, put to death three hundred servants, continuing the slaughter amongst his wives and children until most of them were tortured and burnt. His grandson, Ziadet Allah, murdered all his family including his father, and himself died by poison.

The Moorish historian closes this account with, "God alone is eternal," but all these horrors were no worse than those of the same period in Spain, in the name of Jesus of Nazareth.

The glory of Kārawân was like unto a dying fire: now it flames out and, under the first of the Green Khalifas, Tripoli, Lombardy, Genoa, and Sicily are captured.

Then came Robert of Sicily who wisely divided the power of that island, establishing equal faiths and rights, causing the first real union between the Cross and Crescent, but the glory of Kārawân steadily decreased; the cradle and shrine of Islam in Africa began to pass away and its history ends about the same period as the close of the Saxon

dynasty of England. As I gaze outward from the giralda of the great mosque over the low roofs and green meadows towards the eternal hill, to my ears comes the call filling all the heavens above, "God is great, God alone is great."

As we pass outward some pigeons are making the prostrations high up on the great tower. Having been made by Allah the holiest of birds, they never forget it and throughout the world you will find that they are true to the faith of Islam.

With a last look at Kārawân's stately mosques and picturesque people we turn away and a swift run brings us again to Sousse, where we pass the night.

History was once made fast and furious in this nowadays quiet town. Her blue bay has borne ships of Rome and Carthage; Hannibal and Cæsar have both landed here. The chariots of the Imperial City and the elephants of the southern capital have crowded the spaces before this little hotel, where one now sees a few donkeys and camels and watches white sails gliding to the distant fisheries.

To-night the sky is a splendour behind the old white town. Domes and towers sparkle in the magic light, and then the day perishes silently and of its own glory, and we turn to sleep and to dream of ghostly cities and white-robed people.

## CHAPTER XII

Start from Tunis—The Ruins of Dougga—Souk-el-Arba—The Run to Bône—The Cork Forests—Hammam-Meskoutine and its Legends—Constantine—The Route to Biskra—Gorge of El-Kantara—Biskra and the Life there—Ancient Sidi Okba and its People—The Great and the Little Garden of Allah.

WE start from Tunis for the long run to Oran at seven A.M. on a brilliant sparkling morning, and it is joyous to be en route through the rushing winds and over the green country. Tunisian highways are superb and the wings come out on our wheels in short order. Motors are not plentiful in this southern land, hence we have no dust, neither are the roads as yet destroyed by them.

Our route lies over the valleys and through white Moorish villages, while here and there the low black tents of the Bedouins dot the green fields. The population is sparse and the highways almost empty. One wonders why so much time and money should have been spent on them when there seems little use for them to the present time unless it be for military purposes. Certainly there is but little traffic and as I have said the multitude of motorists have not discovered the land as yet, though they will ere long and so find out that

it is a land built for them as it were. Indeed in no other way can it be explored. The rails run only to the principal towns and to drive to the many points of interest would be impossible as the distances are too great and there are, so far, few rest houses or inns save in the large towns. (It is of course impossible to put up with or in an Arab house—better a bed in the open fields.)

We have an example of this to-day. The ruins of Dougga are some fifty miles from Tunis, reached in two hours by motor but with nothing but a wretched Arab town there, no place to stop, and so inaccessible to horses, unless relays were used, and there are no posts for that.

Dougga, though a ruined city of great interest and extent, is not even mentioned in Murray's last Guide to Tunisia, 1891, which shows how little was known about the ancient life and places of the land. A new guide-book is badly needed,—one such as Murray always gives.

Dougga, the ancient Thugga of the Romans, stands high on a hill overlooking a fertile valley. As we approach, the extent of the quaint city is plainly to be seen, but the modern Arab town through which one passes is so dirty and smelly that enthusiasm is subjected to a cold bath.

However, that being past, the ruins are of great interest. There is the theatre, and aqueducts, and yonder a beautiful temple of Jupiter and Minerva. What an elegant portico, how stately those columns, and how graceful the whole. How

could even a barbarian have the heart to destroy it, yet Dougga furnishes a most flagrant example that destruction is not confined to barbarians. Only sixty years ago, a mausoleum, built by some Numidian who died before our era, stood in almost perfect condition. It held, on two stones, a remarkable bi-lingual inscription in the Libyan and Punic tongues, the only known example in Northern Africa.

In 1842, Sir T. Reade, the then H. B. M. Consul-General at Tunis, obtained permission to remove these stones. It was done, but, instead of looking after the work, and sparing the structure, he entrusted it to ignorant, clumsy Arabs, who demolished the mausoleum. The stones are in the British Museum,—of the mausoleum only a few steps now remain.

There is great work in excavating yet to be done in Dougga. As we walk over the hill, its ruins crop up thickly all around us, but the day passes and we enter the motor and move on, leaving the dead city to the Arab dogs just now howling a noisy requiem all over it.

We hold a flying course over valleys and mountains to Souk-el-Arba, which is two hundred kilometres from Tunis, and where we have luncheon.

From there, on to Bône, the route runs north over the mountains, through groves of cork and other trees, and over magnificent highways, and again one wonders why such roads were necessary in Tunis. In France they would seem to be the

result of an ancient civilisation, but here, France is but a newcomer and yet these roads are equal to any in that republic. They are not on Roman foundations, but entirely new, and more are being constructed each year. For instance on the run to Bône it would seem that one perfect and certainly costly road would answer all purposes for a century, but not at all, another is being built.

Through these mountains the sad blue grey of the olive groves is relieved by countless fruit trees in blossom,—almond, cherry, apple, peach, and pear cast delicate shades of colour over the more sombre backgrounds, while bright-eyed lads are gathering the flowering narcissus from the green fields by the way.

This is the African Riviera, as we discover when the summit of the mountains being passed the glory of sea and land spreads out in a beautiful panorama. The waters are blue as sapphire and the cliffs are abrupt and fantastic.

Bône, a comfortable city where we spend the night, is not of interest, but a delightful run with beautiful weather brings us in one hundred kilometres to Hammam-Meskoutine, a lovely nook in the mountains where the hot waters have produced a delightful spot. The hotel and its surroundings remind me of a spot in Java, Garroet. The little hotel spreads around in one-storied arcades and is sheltered by an immense and beautiful tree one thousand years old.

The legend tells us of an Arab who, rich and





The Panorama of Tingad, Algeria





powerful, once lived here, loved his sister, and considered her too beautiful to marry any man save himself. Notwithstanding the Mohammedan law and the supplications of his elders, whose heads he cut off in front of his tent, he commenced the marriage festivities. As the accursed couple were about to retire, the elements interfered. Fire and water, thunder and lightning, roared and hissed and glared about them. When the storm was over, each and every man and woman at the feast, bride, bridegroom, and all, were found petrified, and you may see yonder the entire company. That collection of cone-shaped rocks does look like an assembly of veiled figures commanded to remain just there for ever; the other formations are of the same character as those of our Yellowstone Park at the Giant's-Staircase. On the whole we find the place depressing and even its comfortable and clean hotel does not keep us.

Another ninety-eight kilometres brings us to Constantine. The ride over the mountains is bleak and dreary, like that toward Teheran in North Persia; the people seem very poor, and I am told are so, as the crops have failed for two or three years.

Again I am reminded of some connection with the inhabitants of Western Ireland. Yonder man asleep in the dust could pass for a son of the Emerald Isle, and the resemblance is more striking when he wakes up. Our car rolls over a bridge and into the narrow main street of Constantine where

Toma manages to break some part of the mechanism which necessitates a delay of a day in the Hôtel de Paris—run by a very comfortable landlady who does not allow Monsieur any fruit for dinner and no dinner at all if he is late for it. What's the good of a husband if you cannot do as you desire with him? The location of Constantine is very fine, perched high up on her cliffs, but as all the sewerage of a very dirty population pours down their face our only desire is to get away and as soon as possible we are en route to Biskra.

Our route lies over the mountains directly southward, vast stretches of yellow mountains, lonely and sombre against a blue sky, with here and there pale green meadows over which trains of camels and turbaned Arabs make stately progress. Many storks, pondering deeply the questions of the stork world, are perched the while on some Arab huts, and even high on the cross of a church, where, as we saw lately, they had succeeded in attaching a huge nest.

Last night's storm and cold have deposited a capping of snow on all the higher mountains and the air rushes around and through us, cold and life giving.

Gradually as we roll southward the scene changes, until finally from the crest of a hill the great Sahara lies spread out before us.

The difference between this panorama and the one left behind us is most marked yet difficult to

describe. Those were barren yellow mountains, but these are desert mountains and there is a certain indescribable lonely grandeur about them peculiar to their kind. They seem to have withdrawn themselves into themselves, to stand apart as it were, while between roll the waves of that vast ocean of sand which stretches eastward to the Nile, westward to the Atlantic, and south until the jungles of tropical Africa claim the earth. The whole prospect is of a peculiar golden brown. On those other mountains life exists in patches, here before us no life has ever existed, nor will while time lasts, no matter what efforts man may make, and in gazing on those billows of sand one instinctively listens for the roar of moving waters, but this is the desert where silence and God keep tryst and nothing moves lest a word be lost.

As our route approaches the Gorge of El-Kantara the mountains assume grander and more rugged outlines. As the gateway to the desert and its rich oasis this was an important post of Rome, and here, as the inscriptions prove, was quartered a portion of the third Augustan Legion, and an ancient Roman bridge still spans, with a massive single arch, the rushing river. The gorge itself, a veritable gateway in the mountains, is but some one hundred and twenty feet wide by nine hundred feet long. On either hand the cliffs tower majestically above us while the river rushes and roars beneath. The place is shadowy and sombre, but as we approach the southern entrance,

it widens out like a funnel and frames a charming prospect. The brawling stream flows away before us, bordered on either side by an ocean of palms, —fifteen thousand date palms wave and glitter in the sunlight. Here are the oranges, mulberries, apricots, and apples all blossoming together. Quaint Arab houses add to the prospect, while stately yellow mountains under a deep blue sky enclose the whole. As we pass by the river we note that the women on its banks are unveiled. Along almost the entire route to-day, we have noticed Roman remains, though not of importance.

From here onward the highway is hard and firm and winds serpent-like over mile after mile, until one feels lost in the utter desolation, and fervently prays that the motor may not break down. Ours does not, but moves onward through the grand air and glittering sunshine, until on rounding the shoulder of a mountain the fair oasis of Biskra lies spread out before us, an emerald in a setting of gold, 202 kilos from Constantine.

Biskra, in our first view of it, seems but a small splotch of green in the yellow desert, which from our point upon the mountains rolls away in its vastness southward, eastward, and westward. Biskra is, in fact, but a "splotch," being but three miles long, and a mile in width. It would seem that one might easily miss it on a dark night, and one shudders to think of such a catastrophe, and urges the motor onward as the day is ending and the desert is already full of shadows.

Fortunately for us we could not get rooms at the Royal Hotel, but were directed to a small hostelry, the Oasis, which proves a much more agreeable abiding-place. It faces a beautiful garden, and near by is a public square or park, a perfect bower of trees and shrubs, where I linger many hours doing just nothing at all, and enjoying my work immensely.

On one side of the square, a little Catholic chapel nestles amongst the palms, and when the day is too hot or the odour from the mimosa threatens one's brain with sleep, one may enter and be at rest, with no company save the twinkling lights before the Virgin's shrine.

Across the square, beneath the arches of an arcade is a café, occupied by soldiers in scarlet uniforms and Moors in white burnouses. Evidently the latter have forgotten the Koran's injunction as to wine, and the use thereof by those of the faith, for yonder Moors are drinking the fruit of the vine or I am much mistaken.

We have not had the car out at all to-day. The chauffeur deserves his day off and it's a relief to shut it up now and then. However, it opens up Tunis and Algeria as those lands would not be in any other way. One sees nothing of the land from the trains, while stages and carriages are almost prohibited by the distances, the heat, and, in this section, the howling winds, against which no horse can stand. I cannot imagine a greater torture than an attempt to cover the two hundred

kilos between here and Constantine by horse conveyance, while by motor it is delightful and the road for the most part good. It would be a stupid ride by train.

In a small hotel like ours one becomes interested in every one around. Yonder are two American women who to-morrow at four A.M. will climb into a wretched diligence crowded with Arabs and for two days of eighteen hours each will crawl southward over the desert toward Tuggurt, enduring the blinding heat, the choking sand-storms, the dirty smelly Arabs, in order to see what they call the "real desert." To any one familiar with deserts it's all nonsense, of course, as one can go five miles from Biskra and be as really in the "real desert" as a hundred would take one. Still, man has different methods of enjoyment, so good luck go with them.

There is much commotion just now amongst the French officers who dine here. Yonder party of four seem to be very happy and complacently eating their dinner while those near us are indignant over something which both the proprietor and white-capped cook are unable to explain away. It turns out that a specially selected dinner composed of game sent by friends has been by mistake served the other party and is by now all eaten up. Comment is unnecessary.

To-day I met in the park a young man who came here four months ago from Marseilles, hoping that the warm air and sun would restore the health



which the mistrals of his native town had well-nigh destroyed. So he has sat in this lonely little park for months and must remain two months more, all the time watching himself. Could anything be more desolate? I could not endure Biskra if I did not know I could leave when I desired.

How intensely lonely it is to-day! Above, the sun sends down a yellow glare which only the palm trees render tolerable, but, penetrate beyond their green gloom, and you will be greeted by the wildest of winds blowing the sands of the desert into clouds and causing all the prospect to assume a sad grey tone. The palms appear to be an impassable barrier to these storms, but just listen to it, even from here how it moans and sobs as though all the lost of all the ages had been summoned to judgment—and this poor boy has sat here with his head in his hands for months listening to that moan. Could you endure it, is life worth it?

On the whole Biskra is a much overrated spot. To those who know the Orient its interest is almost *nil*, and the howling winds which blow five days out of the seven make it generally a very disagreeable spot. When the winds are at their height no one ventures beyond the belt of palm trees, as to do so would undoubtedly mean great discomfort and, on "high days," danger of death from suffocation.

The journey here in an automobile is pleasant,

but unless this is your only opportunity of seeing such a spot or your health demands this climate, I should not recommend it. For those who suffer from bronchitis or other throat trouble the place is *intolerable*.

As for the natives they are intensely disagreeable. You may have undergone the comparatively mild curiosity of the Egyptians, but you certainly, unless you have been here, have never experienced the sticking curiosity of these people. As they all speak French it is impossible to escape them. I do not refer to the beggars, one expects such from them, but from every man and boy in the town who has nothing to do, and the majority of them are so employed, you may expect it. If two persons seat themselves in the park they may be sure before long to have a black face thrust between them whose owner joins in the conversation and can scarcely be driven away—there is a slang phrase which I must be pardoned for using as it exactly describes the act, viz., “butting in.” The term must have been discovered here. You are not safe from it for an instant outside your own room.

As for the beggars, the French government might take example from the English in Egypt. In that land once famous for them one passes now almost unaccosted. Placards are placed in all the public places and conveyances asking the co-operation of the travelling public in suppressing the pest by not giving alms, and the success has been very great. Here the beggars are as plentiful as

formerly in Spain and quite as persistent. In fact we discover a month later that they are much more so.

The landlady of our hotel tells me that they disappear absolutely with the tourist season, that one beggar in a family supports the whole lot, able-bodied men and all. I was aware that such a state existed in Mexico, where a "beautiful cripple" is considered a great and direct gift from the blessed Virgin.

It is hard to refuse alms, but we are asked at our hotel not to bestow them at the house or the place would be shortly infested, as the word would be "passed on." However, one's regrets cease when one learns that these rags and this misery are especially adopted for our enslavement. But enough of the seamy side of Biskra.

The oasis is pleasant this morning here in this grove of palms where the sunlight flickers through in a sociable sort of fashion, and white-robed Moors stroll hither and thither, picturesque beggars have assumed their most taking poses, numberless boys tumble around with as few rags of clothing as the law allows, while the touch of needed brilliant colour is given by the brilliant scarlet and blue uniforms of the French officers. The French colours are very effective on some of these blacks. Yonder comes one, a giant in stature, young and black as ebony, wearing a bright blue uniform with a scarlet fez over his black face, undoubtedly a "filthy bargain" but

one would not blame a Desdemona who could consider one of his colour at all. Certainly as he advances under the green tunnel of palm branches and against the brilliant background of the sky he forms a most striking figure. Here comes a boy whose hair offers somewhat violent contrasts of bright red and brown. I asked one the other day whose head was so adorned the reason and he knew enough English to reply "Kill 'em." Graphic to say the least, certainly no further description was needed.

As for the apparent poverty here, the new-comer to these eastern lands must remember that the state of the people which appears so wretched to him is their natural condition. Take them out of it, do your best for them, and then leave them to themselves for a year, and you would find them returned to this which has been their state for a thousand years, in fact, since man came here. Tolstoi's descriptions of the Russian prisons strike an Anglo-Saxon as too awful to be tolerated; but, be they as bad as they may, aside from the punishments therein inflicted, they were and are much better than the homes of the masses. When you consider that the servants in a Russian palace sleep around on the floor, what can you expect of the peasants' hovels and the prisons? Therefore, cease to shiver. Still one's heart goes out here to the little children. The mortality amongst them is appalling and their wondering eyes seem to for ever bear the query, "Wherefore were we born?"

It is sad to note that the children are raised from the time they can walk to be runners in or rounders up of possible victims for their wretched mothers. Yonder comes a bright-eyed little one dragging a wretched old hag in our direction, and having brought her there, immediately looks around for other victims. Approaching are a group of four ladies, we are two men. The child eyes us shrewdly for an instant and then turns to the ladies, with the result that it drags the old mother off to the supposedly richer or more willing victims. These women will *not* work, and hence the beggars. But remember that the money you give the child—and you will give it to a child when to none other—will do that child no good, but be used probably for some lazy father like the one yonder whose under dress is whole and almost clean. His dirty rags are sewn on a foundation, and the whole can be, and doubtless is when he goes home, removed like a mantle. What frauds they all are!

Some twenty kilometres south from Biskra, one finds the ancient and purely Moorish city of Sidi Okba, where the people live as they have done since the great warrior from whom comes its name conquered Africa in A.D. 680. The route there is not easy for the motor, but Toma takes it nevertheless, and we joggle around like a lot of loose apples, and it is very hot. Still we have the better of those in carriages and get a hearty laugh now and then.

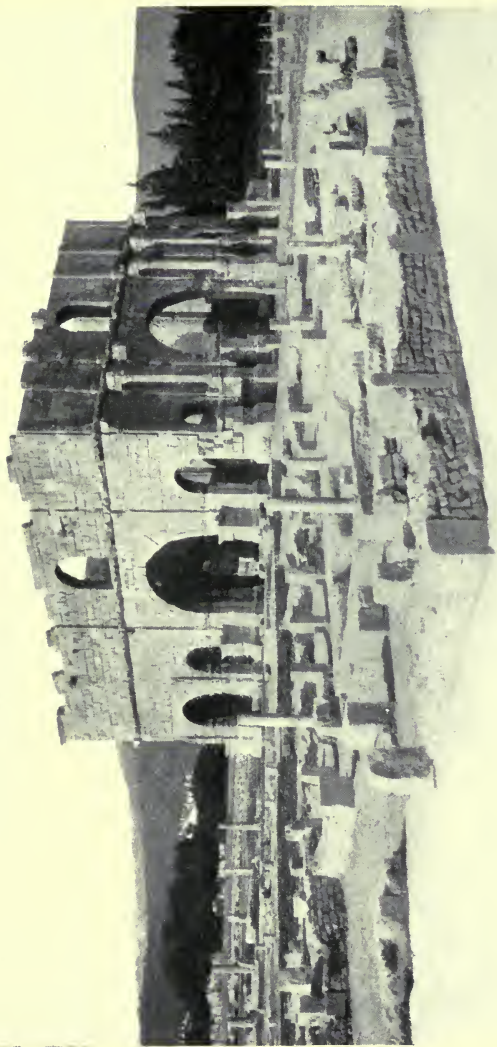
Just now we encounter an Arab family travelling on one horse. It still puzzles me to know where were stowed all that rode thereon. The horse objected to the motor and turned suddenly,—result, a spread over the highway of one man, one woman, three babies, a boy, some chickens, and a dog, all an instant before on that one horse, and it not a large one. Such a family would keenly delight ex-President Roosevelt. The noise was like unto a cage of disturbed geese. A perfectly naked youth of the advanced age of not more than four, sat down in the dust and fairly swore. I regret deeply that I could not understand what he said, it was doubtless unique. On the other side of the road some stately camels gravely regarded the scene with evident disapproval. The whole circumstance was laughable in the extreme, but I doubt if the actors felt so towards it.

Like all the rest of the native towns this very ancient city of Sidi Okba is all of mud and one wonders how these walls could maintain themselves for a thousand years.

We enter between blank surfaces of mud, pierced now and then by a gateway, through which bits of green are to be seen, but the whole is squalid in the extreme.

Once in the town, long lines of white-robed natives push against the walls and allow us a passage and in the square of the mosque the multitude becomes so dense that, what with beggars and guides, one hesitates to leave the car, and the misery, dirt, and





From a photograph by the Author

The Roman Camp at Tingad





disease are enough to cause one to hesitate—that, added to the knowledge that not a man, woman, or child in sight but would pounce on you if they dared. As it is, their only chance to get money is to do something or offer something, or just beg, and most of them do all three.

We finally reach the door of the holy place and having had our feet dusted and covered by large slippers, are allowed to enter. It is not an imposing structure, but does impress and hold a dignity because of its great age, as it is considered the most ancient Mohammedan building in Africa. It is but a rude hall of some spaciousness whose roof is supported by the crudest of wooden posts. Here is the usual sign—of Sidi Okba—and also a pulpit, but the place is so dusty and filthy that it does not hold our attention for any length of time.

Mounting to the top of the giralda, all the old town lies around us, a collection of roofless mud hovels, spreading around the mosque like a rabbit's warren, but I venture to say, not half so clean.

From this point of vantage one is taken into the domestic arrangements in a more intimate manner than this secretive race would wish, but times are changed, and yonder fat Moor seems to object not at all that we are looking right into his harem.

All these people sleep on their roofs even in winter. The gentleman referred to lies on an Arab bed, with his hands crossed in a sentimental

fashion over his fat stomach while his servants sprinkle water on the mud around him to lay the dust and cool the air. These houses being made of mud are for ever dusty or muddy, in fact, these people are born in the mud, live in the mud, and die in the mud, and according to the rules of the Koran, are buried coffinless in shallow mud graves. But yonder fat old man has no intention of doing so at present and keeps his servants busily at work making his stay on this earth agreeable according to his view thereof; in the next little topless box of a room are his wives greatly enjoying the glances of the Franks.

What a life, from the cradle to the grave, to do just nothing, unless they be very poor and must work outside,—but for that class below just nothing at all throughout all the weary years, shut up in mud hovels. But there is everything in the point of view. I have no doubt but that yonder house is a great mansion from their point.

These ladies have an arbour over them made of the bent branches of some trees and appear to be very contented.

The same indolent life is everywhere around as far as we can see, but down in the narrow streets there is movement enough, though the men apparently sit around and smoke all day.

In one respect France and England are in accord—they do not in any way interfere with the religion of the peoples in their distant provinces, but

rather encourage them in every respect, building their mosques for them and enabling them to hold them sacred from intrusion of vandal tourists, who have so little hesitated to outrage every sense of decency and propriety that their exclusion became necessary.

You do not see many French or English flags in either colony and the native rulers are upheld wherever it is possible.

It is stated that the courts are impartial, and that French and natives alike obtain justice,—a contrast that to our consular courts on the Asiatic coast some years since, wherein, it was a common saying, no native could ever obtain justice. I hope that is all changed now, since the removal of some of the men who so disgraced our nation. But to return to Sidi Okba.

On the whole the town is but a labyrinth of big mud boxes with no tops, crumbling, stinking, and dirty. How the people exist at all is a wonder, and that such a spot as this must breed diseases of all sorts is a surety. With a sigh of relief the mind and eye wander outward to where the band of palms surround the town and which in turn are encircled by the glittering desert spreading off to the mountains on the north, and on the south into the infinite level of the great Sahara, and for a time I forget the scene below as my thoughts travel into its vastness. What might not come out of those ever-changing, quivering distances—beautiful, fascinating always, when viewed from

afar, but the mind fills with terror at what might happen if one were lost out there.

There was a weird painting in Oran, one which haunted my dreams. In it the desert stretches away, yellow wave on yellow wave, to the outer brink of the world, over its sands the sun is just rising, and all the sky pulsates with rose and pale green shot with crimson. In the foreground wanders away a solitary gaunt camel bearing something, what, you cannot distinguish, but the vultures dotting the sky or hovering closely down tell only too graphically. All is dead there save those birds and this camel whose lonely figure renders the desolation more intense, more horrible. Being at home in those solitudes he has outlived all who were with him (unless, which God forbid, that thing on his back is still alive), and will wander on and on until he falls in the awful heat to be torn to pieces by those vultures while yet alive, leaving nothing save his bones to bleach and bleach and crumble into that sand—and the rest is silence.

One may condemn modern innovations as destructive of the picturesque, but one accepts them and is grateful especially after such a ride as the one just ended. With sighs of relief we enter this little hotel which, cool and shady, faces an ocean of waving palms. Our rooms open onto the loggia, where long chairs and soft divans invite us to repose in this hot hour, and indeed it would appear a pity not to enjoy such a good sent by a

merciful God to sojourners in this land of heat and sand, but the famous Garden of Allah is to be seen, not the one, the true one, which covers all the land, but one created by one man and made famous by another, and as we depart on the morrow it is now or never.

Our way lies through the dust and heat, past the prosaic Hotel Royal and the stupid casino, down a dusty, hot highway, until we pause before an archway in a high, white wall and, entering, are in paradise. Can such a spot be but the figment of a dream in torrid Biskra? A stately hedge of darkest ilex, masses of deep green palms, waving bamboos, and oleanders in full bloom shelter winding walks, and the babbling of brooks sounds all around one. A twilight fills the place, and every here and there, there rises, embowered in the splendid purple bougainvilleas, a white kiosk, cool and shadowy, close by the whispering waters. Here one may repose the soul, and does indeed, most gratefully, repose the body. It is delicious to rest and be silent.

Wandering through the shade, one comes upon the outer wall where an enchanting prospect of desert is spread abroad. In the middle foreground the white dome of some marabout's tomb, yonder a white burnoused Arab on a splendid horse, and beyond the scarlet and blue of a French officer on a black charger, while off and away, wave on wave, almost quivering with life, rolls the desert to a chain of yellow mountains, all

against a deep blue sky. Truly the great garden of Allah, and all the more fascinating when viewed from this grateful shade; but time passes, the day is almost done, and we must go forth, but it is with a desire to inscribe over the archway a remembrance of the palace at Delhi, "If there be an Eden of bliss it is this, it is this, it is this, none but this."

The mendicant world has had its siesta and is ready for business as we return to the hotel, and notwithstanding that they are, most of them, such frauds, they succeed in draining many coppers from us. Ah well, they are such merry beggars, and when an armless, wretched, ragged, and almost blind man, surely near his century, laughs at one's refusal, he is apt to be rewarded for his jest with fate.

Our fat old landlady assures us that it will be no trouble, indeed quite a delight, to send tea up to our balcony, and fulfils her promise to her own credit and our satisfaction. As I have stated, this is not *the* hotel of Biskra; that, the Royal, was crowded and sent us here, for which we owe them a debt of gratitude. That is full of attempted fashion, much gold braid, etc., and faces an arid hot square, with not a tree near it. This is an old stone structure, all arcades, full of shadowy corners and cool loggias, and overlooks an ocean of palms. There is no gold braid or attempted fashion; our chambermaid is also the porter and appears in full dress only for dinner. The only



woman, save the huge landlady, that I have seen around the house is his wife who assists him up-stairs.

If you are interested in the reptile and insect life of the desert, it is here in bottles all around the entrance hall, where a comfortable cat will make you welcome. Across the street, under the shadow of a wall and beneath some trees, are a few benches where I pass the drowsy hours and am writing now, but the light fades and night descends, and with it the wind, which has been moaning around us all day, drops to rest.

To-morrow we leave Biskra, and while I have been disappointed in some things I am glad to have seen it, though I do not think it will ever be a great resort, because of its howling winds.

## CHAPTER XIII

Departure from Biskra—Pastoral Life of the Bible—The Years 3000 B.C. and 2000 A.D. Confront Each Other—The Religion of the Prophet—Batna—Ancient Timgad—A Stately Roman City—Its Downfall, Burial, and Resurrection.

HAVE you ever seen the sun rise over a grove of palms? If not, then there is a new sensation left even to a weary mortal like yourself.

We must be en route this morning early, and the day is just coming when I am warned that it is time to move. That I do, but no farther than the window, as I know through many years past just what to expect. The ocean of green before me has just begun to quiver after the dead stillness of the night. The delicate fronds wave and twist with almost human effect, and seem to beckon me out into the free air. All is pale green against an opalescent sky just turning to rose, and the arch at the end of the loggia frames one fantastic yellow mountain backed by the fair light. How good it is to be abroad at such an hour; it makes one almost a boy again.

The air, as we leave Biskra, is delightful, just cool enough to drive away all bad dreams if we

have had any and strong enough to renew life to all of us, which after one has passed forty is often very necessary, even under the best of conditions.

We leave the oasis almost at once and roll out over the fine hard road of the desert. It does not seem necessary to have done more than sweep away the sand to produce the road-bed, which is excellent. The motor awakes and throbs and throbs, and the car flies on and on until from the summit of a mountain we turn to take our last look at Biskra, gleaming emerald-like in her vast yellow frame with the waves of the desert stretching away towards darkest Africa. Then the mountains receive us and hold us all day long. The ride from first to last is one of the most picturesque I have ever taken, but I must warn my reader that it would not be so in the train,—from a carriage, perhaps, but that would be tedious; certainly in a motor it is perfection.

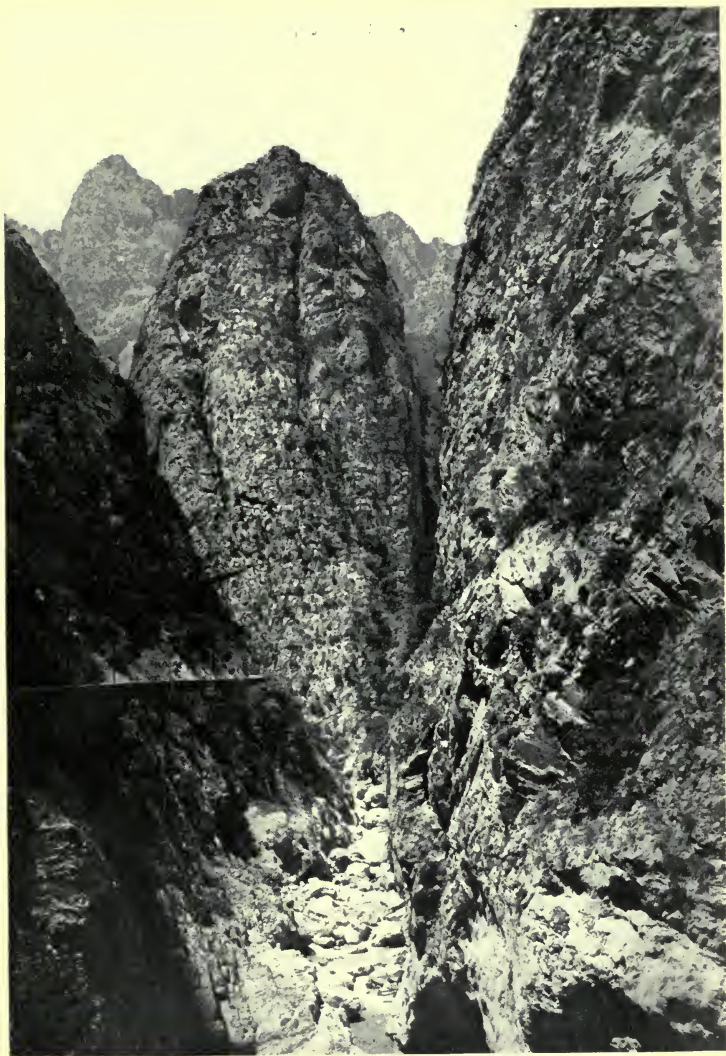
Some leagues onward on rounding the shoulder of a mountain the curtains of the past part and this twentieth century comes face to face with 3000 B.C. On the one side our car with its begoggled and tightly tied down inmates, its glistening brasses and puffing power, on the other, directly facing us and in the centre of the broad white way, a stately figure robed as Moses must have been when he led his children off and away from their bondage. Yellow slippers project beneath the hem of a white under robe over which, in most kingly fashion, he wears a long brown burnous reaching to his feet.

His dark benevolent face is topped by a gigantic white turban, bound around by a silk scarf of many colours. He carries a long staff and advances with the greatest dignity, gravely saluting.

Off and away on either hand stretch green meadows, dotted with many sheep and encircled by the purple mountains. Behind crowds his caravan,—horses of great beauty, camels, donkeys, and many dogs. On the first white camel rides what must evidently be the mother or first wife, one can never tell the age of these women after twenty is passed. This one seems old but is robed in many colours and wears silver earrings, formed by immense hoops of some inches in diameter. One can see that her fingers are loaded with rings, and that she is seated on fine rugs, also that she rides alone on her great white beast. How stately its movements, slowly pacing past us, how magnificently it holds its head. All the other horses and camels are crowded with women and children. Babies hang round like glass balls on a Christmas tree. In the panniers are many little lambs and countless chickens, all tucked in save their heads. The boys and younger men drive the sheep and the dogs collect the stragglers.

So passes the year 3000 B.C. whilst A.D. 2000 sits in silence, giving to the old days the reverence which is their due.

Then the motor sputters, and we drop down some five thousand years, with no injury to any that I can see and with a better feeling to all



From a photograph by the Author  
Chabet Gorge



for that glimpse amongst the peoples of remote antiquity.

Yet one wonders why a religion which has perpetuated to our day the exact state of affairs which held centuries ago was permitted by the good God. Surely "if we do not progress, we must decline, we starve in the possessed." The descendants of the old prophets have, the world over, adopted the changes and advances caused by time, but with the appearance of Islamism the manners and customs of that day were confirmed, and wherever the Crescent rules they yet abide absolutely unchanged. What is there in that religion to hold its people so? Is it lust, or indolence? Certainly from any decent standpoint there can be no recommendation found in it as it is to-day,—the degradation and enslavement of the women, the filth and disease in which the people live and will live for ever, the awful mortality amongst the children with whom it is only the strongest that survive,—in little Biskra they die at the rate of several a day,—the absolute lack of advance or improvement of any sort, that is Islamism, that will be Islamism unto its final extinction. Will the day ever come? It is the only creed which has impressed upon its people the belief that it is the *only* one which worships God. One of the Christian churches endeavoured to do so in the dark ages and we know how that church failed. She wisely appreciates that fact and now moves



onward and forward. With these people Moses would, if he could return, feel absolutely at home again.

We pass northward until Batna is reached—a point I should advise all against stopping at, not only because of its filthy hotel, but more filthy landlady. We lunched there on the way up but avoid it to-day, and, turning westward, drop the Orient behind and away from us. It vanishes as utterly as though but a mist of the morning. History makes a shift complete and entire and we are in the domain of Imperial Rome. How little the world of travellers knows of these lands? How many at home ever heard of or know what the name “Timgad” signifies? Is it a native town, a caravansary, a valley, or a mountain? None of those, but the ruins of a great Roman city, ruins far more extensive, certainly far more stately and impressive than those of any Italian town.

Timgad occupies a plain which slopes upward for a long distance and is encircled by a distant chain of mountains.

The forum of the city crowns the highest point and the whole is visible for a great distance as one approaches. You enter on a broad stone-paved avenue intersected by another of like width and at regular intervals by others of narrower, and in the former the tracks of the chariot wheels are deeply cut.

On either side the houses and other buildings have been demolished to about half the height

of the first story but the entire plan of the buildings shows most interestingly,—every court and chamber of the private house, the arrangement of the bathing establishments, the drainage and sewerage of the city, the form of the shops. The pavement of the forum is still perfect and its form plainly determined by the many columns still erect. I think it is the most perfect I have ever seen.

As one stands on the steps leading to the forum the main avenue of the city drops away in front, while another equally as wide and perfect crosses from side to side of the city and terminates on the left in an arch of grand proportions and in very good condition, more majestic, I think, than any at Rome.

The Temple of Minerva here was of great dimensions and very stately, judging by the columns which are still standing.

Away in all directions spread these ruins of what must have been a very populous city. While Timgad is in a valley, the city really occupies an elevation. Timgad, the ancient Thamugadi, is sheltered by the Aurès Mountains near the northern fringe of the great Sahara. It stood in the days of Rome at the junction of six roads and was fortified strongly. Founded in A.D. 100 by Lucius Manatius Gallus, it flourished for three centuries. Then came the native insurrection, followed by the Vandals in 535, who partially destroyed it. It was restored by Solomon, a Byzantine general, and was prosperous until the Arab invasion of 646.

Abandonment followed its fall, and the passing centuries piled ruin upon ruin and covered the whole with sand until the great city was blotted out.

The traveller of to-day is thankful that it was so completely buried, yet with such material that nothing was injured and all is easily uncovered, the result being that in these latter days we may enter these gates and more fully understand what a Roman city was and what the manner of living therein than in any other spot on earth. Rome not excepted.

All this section is rich in ruins but Timgad is more complete and majestic than any other. To my thinking it far surpasses in majesty Pompeii. The mosaic pavements are more extensive and more perfect than in the Italian city and Pompeii holds nothing which will approach the magnificent sweep of these avenues or the majesty of yonder arch which bears the inscription, "The Emperor Cæsar Nerva Trajan Augustus Germanicus, son of the divine Nerva, etc., etc., founded the Marcian colony. Trajanam of Thamugadi by the help of the Third Legion, Lucius Manatius Gallus being the legal imperial proprietor."

In this atmosphere these remains of Timgad will outlast time if man lets them alone.

It is to me certainly the most interesting Roman ruin I have ever seen, probably because no modern era has intruded its remains here. There is no dirty Arab town or house near it, in fact no house

at all save the little one where we lunched—it is all except the great monastery purely Roman, and therefore gives greater satisfaction than is usually the case.

One feels as though no dress should be worn here but the toga, no foot-covering save sandals.

Here, philosophers debated; here, the public meetings were held; here the children gathered, and one may still discern in the pavements the gaming tablet cut carelessly with a knife.

Here is an inscription, which, being translated, reads, "To hunt, to bathe, to play, to laugh, that is to live."

Yonder is the theatre with its twenty-five tiers.

Life was not hard to the rich in Timgad. Here are luxurious baths, courts, gardens, and fish tanks. It would not greatly surprise you to see a superb chariot roll by,—there were many here, judging from those ruts on the pavement.

Other highways were discovered outside the city walls, bordered with little shops, with work-rooms and workmen's lodgings in the rear as well as the shop-keepers' own abodes. There the country people could make purchases at once without entering the city. Soldiers from the Augustan Third Legion used to congregate there. Those suburban districts were bustling with activity.

Among mediocre dwellings rose certain larger, more luxurious houses, with paved vestibules at the front and porticoes around the outside. Huge

square basins occupied the middle of these buildings, and the rooms opened upon atriums paved with marble mosaics.

The principal event of later years has been the excavation of the great Timgad Monastery. The diggings of the preceding years had unearthed basilica and several contiguous buildings. The work is finished now. We see the long alignment of galleries and cells, the common rooms, the lavatory and laundry, and the hexagonal baptistry with its central tank, which was reached by three steps sheathed in mosaics. Extensive additions to the abbey show how the community grew and prospered.

And this magnificent Christian edifice, 530 feet long by 230 broad, disappeared one day, like all the pagan monuments of Timgad, when the barbaric invaders swooped down from the Aurès. A cemetery was established on the site, and it has been necessary to remove the tombs in order to reach the monastery pavements below. And they are worth all the toil it takes to recover them. They are adorned with zigzags, Chrismons, laurel leaves, and panels in bright and varied colours.

Still more remarkable are those that M. Ballu discovered in two houses within the city. One of these mosaics represents a nude sea goddess dressing her hair. Two genii, likewise nude, bear her aloft upon a seashell. Dolphins gambol about her. The background of the picture con-

sists of red drapery. The other mosaic, framed in acanthus leaves, tendrils, and volutes, with birds flitting among them, shows us another nude goddess, in the midst of the waves, seated upon a Triton's tail; she holds up her tresses with her hand; a light, filmy veil floats above her head.

Springs in the gorges of the Ain-Morris supplied the city, furnishing all the water needed for the baths, fountains, markets, public edifices, and dwellings. After washing the streets, the water passed through the aqueducts and sewers to replenish the gardens of the outlying districts. It was one of the finest things about this city of the desert that its streets were always white and clean, its squares cooled by plashing fountains, its surrounding country gay with greenery.

These abundant waters were the very life of Timgad. When the first Berber invaders swooped down, the city of Trajan was sacked, but as the aqueducts were not destroyed, water still flowed in from the Ain-Morris. In the immense desert that reaches down from the mountains of the Aurès toward Batna, Thamugadi remained a sort of oasis. It emerged from its ruins. A Christian city, smaller but beautiful and flourishing, took the place of the Roman town. Then arose the basilicas, the baptisteries, and the convents whose imposing remains have been discovered. A fort, built by Solomon, successor to Belisarius, protected the city against fresh incursions. It lived in peace for how long a time?



Of its final destruction nothing definite is known. M. Albert Ballu tells us that in the eighth century the Berbers camped on its ruins. This time Timgad was not to rise again. The wrecked aqueducts no longer furnished water. Houses and public buildings were overthrown. The desert crept over the place where Timgad had stood. Dust-storms buried the débris. Sand-storms completed its interment. It seemed to sink into the earth. In that awful solitude no witness was at hand to make record of its fate. Only the entablature of a great triumphal arch was left above the surface to indicate that the place had once been inhabited.

To me Roman ruins are cold. I do not care to linger amongst them nor indeed to study their history as I do the castles and abbeys of the Middle Ages, but I did not feel so as regards Timgad.

It was not difficult to restore to its old time splendour this city of the great Empire, nor to fill its streets with moving throngs and many chariots and horses, to, in fact, make it live once more.

To reach here save in motors is tedious and difficult. It means a long ride of many hours by train from Algiers or Tunis to Batna and a long carriage drive from there. The motor brings it within easy reach as it does all the interesting parts of North Africa.

I had visited these lands before, but I know now that I saw little or nothing and the longer I remain



the more convinced I am of that fact; and when the work of excavation over North Africa is completed, no other section of the world will be so full of attractions for the archæologist and the student of history. Carthage has scarcely been examined, Utica not at all.

On our return to Batna we pause a moment at the ruins of the great Roman camp, but after Timgad they do not hold us long and we are soon off and away, turning for a last glimpse at the stately city where she crowns her hill and is guarded by her solemn mountains. Are those Roman legions or shadows moving down her grand avenue? Doubtless the place is haunted.

Between the cold rushing air and the great interests of the day we are both tired and sleepy when we reach our hotel in Constantine, but such a day was worth being both, a day to be remembered when one becomes too old for aught save dreams.

## CHAPTER XIV

Departure from Constantine—Rapid Run to Setif—A Dirty Place—Descent of the Mountains and Passage of the Gorge of Chabet-el-Akhira—Superb Scenery—The Great Roadways of the French—Their Construction and Maintenance—The African Riviera—Bougie—The Kabyles and their Mountains—Arrival at Algiers.

LEAVING Constantine in the early morning, the ride to Setif is on the whole uninteresting and somewhat dreary, the scenery being without especial charm and the entire route lying over a high, dusty plateau of some thirty-five hundred feet in altitude, where the snow is deep in winter and the dust blows in clouds all the other months of the year. However, we are reconciled to the ride by the superb highway,—hard as a floor and wide, it enabled one to give one's self up to the joy of motion pure and simple, and one is not disappointed. Meeting but one motor in all the one hundred and twenty-seven kilometres, we are not troubled with dust, though we must bestow some on other people.

The prospect has ceased to be oriental save for the inhabitants and they are very few in number. Camels have vanished entirely. "Too cold," the chauffeur says, but I have seen the stately animal



From a photograph by Geiser

A Native Village on the Grand Kabylia



on the Dariel Pass and trudging through the snows of Siberia; they are also very plentiful around Pekin where the cold is intense and long enduring in winter. However, those beasts were much more sturdy looking than these in Africa. Be the reason what it may, they are gone and the little donkeys have all the land to themselves, except for the stage horses.

We are somewhat late for luncheon at Setif,—Hôtel de France,—and do not regret it. The town and hotel are horrid and dirty, especially the latter. I think it only right to warn all travellers against spending any more time at this house, and the one in Batna, than is absolutely necessary. While the food was not so bad in either, one almost hesitated to eat it because of the filthy, dirty hotel, dirt and filth maintaining from the frouzy headed landladies to the “boots.” If you must pass there other than in a motor, arrange to take the train either for Constantine or Algiers.

Our half day from Setif to Bougie made up for all the tediousness of the morning's ride and the dirty hotel. It was one of the most glorious I have ever taken and I think the world holds no superior and few equals. Except for the one peak of the Kasbic its scenery is superior to the Dariel Pass in the Caucasus.

We leave Setif *full* as to the inner man and our route turns at once northward into the barren mountains through which for fifty kilometres we wind, nearly always descending in long or

short curves and at a steep angle. Sometimes we can trace the road for miles before us far down into distant valleys and we descend for so great a distance that we begin to lose faith in the possibility of a famous gorge such as had been promised. But even so the scenery is grand, though very sombre, not a tree or bit of green in all the distance. Be certain of the strength of your car and the ability of your driver when you come this way; a break or false turn would send all to eternity at most any moment. We have a very sturdy Darach and an excellent man. At least he appears so throughout the African tour. In Spain he lost his head on one occasion and almost ended all things for the party. The car came from the auto Palace Garage in Tunis. It has served us so well that I cannot but mention its name. To-day tests the motor severely and successfully.

Still it is with some relief that we pause for a moment in a little town where a large, fat French lady furnishes us amusement by jumping wildly from a wagon and sitting down, inadvertently, I admit, directly in front of our wheels. There is absolutely no danger as we are not moving, but her terror is comical. Assisted to her feet, soothed and brushed off by two officers, she is soon all smiles and doubtless could have repeated the performance with the assurance of such attention. It is impossible not to laugh and I fear I do so. Whatever it was does not please the officers and

it is as well that our car rolls onward. It is here, at Kharata, that the gorge of the Chabet-el-Akhira commences. Kharata is thirteen hundred feet above the sea and the gorge acts like a huge cool air-duct: we feel it blowing strongly between yonder cliffs which rise portal-like at its entrance. The traveller is at once struck with the idea that this gorge is the result of a tremendous convulsion of nature. It is seven kilometres (five miles) in length and the cliffs rise perpendicularly for a thousand or fifteen hundred feet and so narrow that a stone can be cast from one side to the other at any point. Perhaps when the great Sahara was a sea this was one of the outlets or inlets to the outer sea. The highway is cut out of the cliff's side the entire distance and is some three hundred feet above a rushing torrent. Until it was built, the gorge could be inspected only from the lateral valleys.

The road is a magnificent piece of engineering. As our car rolls along we have but a glimpse now and then of a strip of blue sky far overhead. The cliffs rise barren and sombre and no sound breaks the stillness save the voice of the torrent, or now and then the wild screeching of a troop of monkeys fleeing away before us. Wherever the lateral valleys enter are beautiful cascades and luxuriant foliage, but the general aspect is gloomy and grand past expression. Finally it widens out, the river assumes more stately proportions and is less boisterous, while the banks and foot-hills are bowers of blooming oleanders and roses, and then



vast forests of cork and oak trees spread away to the sea.

France has done a great work in building all these roads of Tunisia and Algeria, but nothing to compare to this of the Chabet Gorge, which she completed in 1864.

One beauty succeeds another in this wonderful land. We have scarcely recovered from the impressions produced by the gorge, when the road running by the sea commences the ascent of Cape Okas which it winds around, more than one hundred feet above the sparkling waters; until finally the Gulf of Bougie, encircled by most picturesque mountains, seven thousand feet high, spreads away before us.

There is something peculiarly beautiful about this African Riviera. It is difficult at first to decide exactly what it is that causes the exquisite effect. I think it is the colour of the mountains, warmer, richer than in the North, sparkling ever with the sunlight of this glorious South and kissed by it into a life which those of the northern climes never know. Certainly here at Bougie mountains and sea and sky are of a beauty past description.

Bougie is two thousand years old and holds many spots of interest and romance in and near her. Yonder on Cape Okas is the tomb of a saint so holy that, when in life he prayed, the marabouts (saints) of all the other countries sped thither in the form of birds, just to hear his voice.

Carthaginians, Romans, Vandals, Berbers, Arabs, Spaniards, and Turks have all passed this way and all left their trace in Bougie. A high state of civilisation existed here centuries ago.

We think the heliograph a modern discovery,—it was used here commonly in 1068. Ferdinand of Spain possessed Bougie in 1508, thereby “carrying the war into Africa.” The Algerians drove out the general of Charles V, who was allowed to return to Spain with four hundred men, whereupon the King promptly cut off his head, as the Moors knew that he would do.

That ended the grandeur of Bougie, which shriveled up almost to nothing, until France instilled new life, and now it is a pleasant little city with some remnants of its former state in its ruined forts. The city gave its name to the French for “candle” as the wax came from here.

We arrived at sunset at the town perched high on a hill overlooking the sea. Chances for rooms look slim enough at the Hôtel de France as two of “Cook’s caravans,” as the manager of the hotel calls them, are installed and take up nearly the whole house. However, we are disposed of finally and all goes well.

France has done in North Africa what England will do, if she is wise, in Egypt. The highroad is an equal civiliser and settler with the railroad and reaches points that the latter cannot reach.

To go back a little, as we left the Chabet Gorge and came out upon the sea, we entered upon one

of the finest pieces of road-making in the world. Europe has nothing to equal it. I refer to the highway between Bougie and Jijeli. The road is probably two hundred miles in length along a most forbidding coast, where almost the entire route has been cut out of the solid rocks, high up over the sea, forming the most wonderful corniche in the world, and there does not appear to be any town between the two mentioned, and they are inconsiderable in size.

France has here, as all over the land, built for the future. The equal of the Roman roads, these will last for centuries, and by their means France is opening this country and preparing it for the immense population it will certainly contain in the coming years.

That nation may be on the decline in the mother country, but such is certainly not the case in her provinces of North Africa. All over the land she has spread a network, not only of great, but lesser, highways, and every mountain pathway has been laid off with the greatest care and skill. And this is not only near the great cities, but extending far out into the desert for the accomodation of the great caravans as they come in from the heart of darkest Africa.

These roads are built to stay. All the bridges and tunnels are of stone; the outer walls along a cliff or over the sea are a yard high and eighteen inches thick. The widest gorge was no barrier, nor the highest mountains. The engineers em-

ployed were past-masters of their profession and a century hence will find their work as firm as to-day. I noticed especially west of Algiers endless numbers of highways stretching off in the distance for miles in perfectly straight lines, from which other roads branched off in all directions, until the most remote regions of these provinces have been reached. What this means from a military standpoint alone can easily be understood. France believes that good roads invite settlers and does not wait until a district becomes populous but builds into the mountains and deserts, and as surely population follows.

She keeps all her roads in perfect order. This whole land is divided into sections, each with its overseer who has a full corps of men under him. He has a good house to live in, provided by the state. Every kilometre of these roads is marked by a square stone giving the needed distance to the next town, and every ten metres of every kilometre is plainly marked in like manner. Here also are watering troughs, with pure water, built of concrete or stone.

What would not such roads do for the United States? Why cannot we do what any other nation does? This is a younger land, from this point, than ours, and yet it is far ahead of us,—so far, that we blush with shame when we come here, and fully understand the subject. All this has been accomplished since 1860. How weary it

makes one with the blatant braggadocio of so many thousands of our countrymen who wander Europe over.

There is absolutely no excuse for us. If the money paid out on our infamous pension list, which we dare not publish, or that stolen in the building of certain State-houses had been expended on the roads, the condition of our highways would be far different from what they now are; yet those thieves flaunt their presence at our best resorts, and boast that they have the money and the state may whistle for it. All this brings to mind, also some thoughts as to the enlargement of one of our great canals. What are the salaries being paid there and what work has been done?

The tax for the support of these roads is three days' work on the main roads and one on the minor for every adult in the land, and can be worked out or paid in cash. Appreciating the benefit to themselves of these mediums of easy and comfortable communication the natives gladly work out, when they do not pay, and appear to enjoy the work. Our rural population would doubtless gratefully support any move our Government made in such a direction, and the benefit to the whole land would be past computation, especially to *Alaska* from which at present we are taking everything and giving nothing.

There is not a nation on the globe which could not in this respect profit by a study of these

French methods here in North Africa, where the roads are far better than in France itself.

I remember years ago gazing in wonder and admiration at the superb highways viewed from the railway carriage and longing to travel over them. It was impossible then, but with the motor all that is changed, and we skim these marvellous ways as the swallows skim the air and almost as fast. Hence if you wish delight in motoring come to Algeria and Tunisia, and come soon, before other motorists arrive, as it is a joy to have the land to yourselves. As I write we are en route from Bougie on a long ride over the grand Kabylia, that majestic, snow capped range which bounds the line of vision eastward from Algiers. While this section of the Atlas range is not so lofty as those in Morocco, where they attain an altitude of twelve thousand feet, they are very majestic and get their eight thousand feet right up from the sea, so that no effect is lost by a gradual rise.

The settled portions of Algeria consist of three departments, Algiers, Constantine, and Oran, which are governed much like France. The rest is under military rule. Of the 4,500,000 inhabitants half a million are Europeans.

The name Kabyles means a tribe and is given to the people of Berber origin who inhabit these mountains. They are the opposite of the Arabs. They never ride the horse, they are not nomads or pastoral, but live in these villages which cling



to their mountains. They are good farmers and industrious in many other ways and are very patriotic. In this latter characteristic they resemble the Japanese. In battle, they must conquer or die,—to return defeated is disgrace lasting for ever and extending to one's whole family. If they die in battle they are buried apart and that spot for ever after is a place of prayer.

Until the French conquest of 1857 they had never surrendered their independence, but from their rugged highlands watched the wars of ages sweep over sea and plain below them, but always to be arrested at the foot of their mountains. They remind one somewhat of the old clans of Scotland.

France has respected their institutions, manners, and customs, and they live at peace, freely commingling yet ever apart,—very different from the Arabs who live in isolated tribes rarely approaching civilisation. The race is certainly very much mixed up with northern races, as their fair complexion, blue eyes, and red hair testify.

Unfortunately it rains, and we miss half the pleasure of the ride; still enough is seen to convince us that on a fine day it must be magnificent. The roads are as superb here as elsewhere, and our motion even on this rainy day is delightful. Now and then when the mist permits we catch glimpses far down into green valleys or up where snow tips are backed by blue skies. Here and there



like incrustations cluster the Kabyle villages, picturesque from a distance, but take my advice and do not approach nearer. They are very filthy places. Personally I prefer the fragrance of the forest air to-day.

Leaving the mountains we lunch at Tizi-ouzou, in a dirty hotel in a wretched Arab town, smothered in dust.

The day wears on to its close as we approach Algiers. These are the vine-growing sections of Algeria pure and simple and the roads are cut up and made unpleasantly rutty by the passing of the heavily laden vans which convey the casks to port.

The soil being limestone produces a disagreeable dust which cuts one's skin into segments. However, that is but for a few hours on our last day, so we have not much to grumble about.

Algiers, approached from the sea, and rising, terrace above terrace, presents a picturesque appearance, but from the land it is not so. When I first visited the place the Moorish town was a prominent feature of the landscape, but it has been swallowed up, drowned out by the French city, and now, one sees only the latter; and the former, when one does find it, is entirely without interest, at least to those who know the Orient from Fez to Samarkand, and from Constantinople to Khartoum.

I shall not describe Algiers. It has been done so often and all the world knows all there is to say about it.

In the picturesque Hotel St. George in Mustapha Superior we rest for nearly a week, amidst bowers of purple Bougainvillea and tea roses, with the blue Mediterranean spread beneath our gaze and the snow range of the grand Kabylia blocking the horizon to the eastward.

## CHAPTER XV

Thoma Purchases the Motor—Departure for Oran—  
A Beautiful Run—Oran—Trouble about the Motor—  
Farewell to Islam Lands.

ONE'S plans change in travelling with every wind, so to speak, and there is small pleasure otherwise. Ours are subject to such violent alterations that at times I do not know where I am bound for. We had expected to take the motor to Oran and discharge it there, understanding that the roads in Spain, whither we are going, are almost impassable. Information differs thereon. To-day's post brings a letter kindly sent by our legation in Madrid to the effect that, while they are not like those of France, they are, for those who do not desire to race, quite passable, that the king motors all over his domain, etc., etc. But the garage in Tunis absolutely refuses to rent the car for the trip. They will sell it for twelve thousand francs and re-buy when we leave Spain "at a fair valuation." All motorists know well what that would mean. We decline the offer, and, settling up with Thoma, discharge the car with great regret.

We reckon however without our host, which

in this case is Thoma. I did not know that Thoma was a capitalist. He does not look like one, and when I gave him fifty francs to buy a good pair of shoes and a pair of leggings he seemed very grateful, almost tearfully so. Hence my amazement, *our* amazement to-day when he coolly said that he would buy the car himself, for go to Spain he would. "In the lexicon of youth there is no such word as fail." So the great Cardinal told us, and so Thoma believes, for he *is* going to Spain, car and all, and we shall go along. From now on he does not go with us: we go with him and he makes us pay for the privilege. I should not be at all surprised if he gets the car and himself taken to America. What was that book, or play, where the family and the family butler are wrecked on a desert island and the butler soon becomes the leader and absolute ruler? We feel much like that to-night. Thoma has a Spanish father and relatives in Spain, which probably has much to do with his decision. At all events he has wired the firm in Tunis that he and the car go to Spain "willy-nilly." I expect to have him pack me and some bags and baggage into the car on Friday next and start for Oran. The others will follow by train on Sunday. I may be taken to Fez or the oasis of Fezzan; Lord knows, I don't, and I don't care. Thoma is a merry devil and will sing, and he may go where it pleases him. We shall see what we shall see.

In the meantime I have forced him to visit a

dentist and have his very excellent teeth, which he so continually shows in broadly smiling, cleaned. The difference is most marked, though I think he was as greatly astonished at the command as was Svengali when he witnessed Taffy's bathing.

Still, Thoma is such an excellent chauffeur that we would forgive him anything.

To-day it came to the very business-like brain of Miss P. that we might be taking things too much for granted about the power of Thoma to take the car to Spain; that we might, and by French courts probably would be, held personally responsible if the Spanish roads caused a wreck. So we telegraphed to the garage in Tunis and received reply that Thoma had really arranged to purchase the car,—a thing we did not feel able to do. (I again dwell upon those fifty francs for his shoes and leggings and ten for the dentist.)

But "en route, en route," ho for the land of the Dons and Hidalgos. So runs the world away.

Leaving one of our party at Algiers because of a stubborn cold, we depart about nine of a brilliant morning. The great orb of day would appear to have polished his surface to an extensive degree, so dazzling is the light. The Mediterranean sparkles and flashes below and as far out as our sight goes. All the vines and flowers and trees are fresh from their night's sleep and deep draughts of dew.

This hotel, the St. George, has been a most attractive stopping place, its terraces and gardens

a delight always, but I can only hope that there may be more bathrooms before I return to its shelter.

Hotels here have had a hard time of late, two of the large ones failed and closed last year, and this only pulled through by a scant margin. It was reported that the plague had effected an entrance at Oran, and that with the troubles in Morocco and the panic in America caused such depression here that the Continental and Palace shut down and remain so.

After all, unless one comes for health and the climate, I do not see that Algiers can be attractive. The native town certainly is not so and is drowned out by the French. The climate is superior to that of Cairo. It is dryer. One can sit on this terrace and not feel the dampness which strikes through overcoat and all at Shepherd's.

However, there is so much else in Egypt that one forgives all that and the colds contracted thereby, and, like all tropical colds, one taken in Cairo lasts you all winter.

But our motor puffs impatiently, and, good-byes said, we are off and away, skimming down the wide white highways with the joyousness of boys, which I am forced to acknowledge we are not, sad to relate, but, enjoy the life that is left you.

Our way leads into the valleys for some kilometres and then we turn into the hills and, finally, high up amongst the Atlas Mountains, and for three hours enjoy one of the most beautiful rides

of the tour, so far, in close communion with the mountain tops and farthest solitudes where the winds blow all megrims away. Enjoy all this, for it is worth it. Look at those flowers. Did man ever see anything more lovely? Green meadows beyond hedges of pale lavender asphodels, orange hued buttercups, pale yellow and pure white daisies, masses of apple and pear trees in full bloom, and all the land a-blush with the almonds. Then the dark blue mountain dotted with white-domed tombs. Indeed it *is* great to be alive.

We lunch at a little place, high up amongst the brown hills, called Milina, a much better meal than one could find at such a place in America, yet it is the worst we have encountered.

As we start onward the land is spread out before and below us in a vast panorama, and from here one may trace our onward route, stretching a perfectly straight highway for at least ten miles, entirely across this plateau of the mountains.

The afternoon's ride would have been tedious but for those long straight stretches of road, of which I have never heretofore encountered so many. There were several such during the afternoon and with such surfaces what a chance for speed, which, as there was nothing to see, we fully availed ourselves of. How we did fly! How the wind sung round us!

The result was that we reached Orleansville, our intended sojourn for the night, a little after three o'clock. To stop now on such a day would have



been stupid so we decided to move on and trust to luck for a sleeping place; being but two men we can put up with much. While Thoma fills up his tank the usual crowd gathers around us, and one of them, a young black woman, attracts our attention at once. Though in Moorish dress she is unveiled, which establishes her station in life at once, a woman of the town. All in white muslin with balloon-like trousers, white draperies over her head and falling in graceful folds around her shoulders, she wears a great quantity of gold jewelry, filagree most of it, with immense hoops in her ears, probably her entire fortune for which she may be murdered any night. Her bold, black eyes search our faces questioningly, but turn hopelessly to some Arab youths that are hanging around her and with whom she shortly runs laughing away.

We are paid for our temerity in increasing our run, by the destruction of an outer and inner tube which blow out about five o'clock. As this is his first day as proprietor Thoma looks grave.

It was seven before we reached Relizane and find comfortable quarters in the Hôtel de Paris close by the railway. As the tracks appear to be used for anything except the passage of trains, we are not disturbed by noise. In all the four hundred and sixty-seven kilometres between Algiers and Oran, though within sight of the road most of the time, we saw but one train. There are two passenger trains a day each way between

these cities, morning and evening, but we saw but one of the four.

The Hôtel de Paris brings the earth closer. It is but one story in height and built around a court. There Monsieur sits smoking cigarettes and Madam is knitting.

"Have you rooms?"

"But yes, certainly the gentlemen shall be accommodated," which, with an eye to future patronage from him on future runs, means as good a room for Thoma as our own. They are all flat down on the ground, for which reason the casements are protected by heavy iron bars, through which several dogs and cats enter during the night but which keeps out Arab kind. The floors are shining tiles, as are those in the *sâle-à-manger*, and hallway. The beds are massive and bear those mountainous feather covers. There is one candle which serves to make the darkness visible. While waiting for dinner we sit in the garden with Madam, who tells us that it is hot, very hot here in summer, and life difficult to bear. That there are some fourteen thousand inhabitants, mostly Arabs. To-day has been a fête with them, which it is a pity Monsieur could not have seen, the "fête Mosambique," much spear-throwing and high jumping, doubtless attended by the usual discordant noises and loud smells of an Arab gathering,—heat, dust, dirt, and dogs everywhere, with the human element the dirtiest of the whole. I do not *regret* that I missed it.

As usual I am much interested and amused at the people in this provincial French hotel.

As I sit at table, the room being as yet empty, I notice that the napkins are each folded as the taste and ability of its user dictate. All sorts of animals are represented, also knots and bows, pyramids and balls, so that each man may identify his own. In the little hotel at Biskra one party had cloth cases to hold theirs and every article on the table, including the mouths of the water bottle, were assiduously polished at each meal. This would make an American head-waiter angry, but not so here: it is taken as a matter of course, though I doubt its being as much needed as in our own land; but to return. Gradually the people enter and silently take their places. Not a word is spoken during the meal; all the time not needed for eating is employed in looking us over. After dinner they depart as silently as they entered. How different from the rattle and clatter of a German hotel. Every one apparently goes to bed at once and we follow suit shortly as there is no place else to go. Oran is reached before luncheon and after the stopping places of the last day or so we fairly revel in her very excellent hotel where we await the departure of our ship for Spain.

Our last day in Africa is not to pass unmarked.

At seven in the morning P. breaks into my room waving a telegram. I at once imagined that some accident or illness had overtaken his sister or her maid, who were to have arrived early

this morning by train from Algiers, and am greatly relieved to find that they are both already in the hotel, and well. The telegram comes from the garage in Tunis and is to the effect that no money having been received from the chauffeur we are forbidden to take the car out of Algeria, and if we attempt to do so we'll be served "with attachment." As we know the money has been sent and as it in no way concerns us, we are somewhat indignant, but our wrath is nothing when compared to that of our little chauffeur, whom we find calmly at breakfast bearing all the airs of a *rentier*. He fairly jumps with rage, but that does not help matters, and we are booked to sail at eleven to-night. The whole trouble arises from the intervention of Sunday, when the post in Tunis is not delivered. The money, sent Friday night, is certainly in their hands by now, but several telegrams are indited notwithstanding. We proceed to embark, auto and all, and by seven at night have the assurance that all is well. Their threat against us was absurd as the whole arrangement was between their house and their chauffeur. As their representative, we had paid him off and dismissed the car on Wednesday last. All subsequent arrangements were between themselves, we merely renting from the purchaser of the car, *i.e.*, the chauffeur. However, they might have caused us delay at least, and much unpleasantness, all danger of which is over and the ship pants to be off.

What a tour it has been, and it is but half over. What a gorgeous panorama has unrolled itself since we sailed from Marseilles four months ago. Beginning with a glimpse of the wrecked cities of Messina and Reggio as our ship steamed past them; then on through stately Egypt, and far south until the sadness and the brilliance of the Sudan surrounded us, giving place to the glittering Red Sea and gay city of the Caliphs; and then the joyous motor tour in Tunisia and Algeria, when Carthage, Tunis, Kār-awân, Dougga, Timgad the magnificent, and fairy Biskra, with its Garden of Allah, succeeded each other and were followed by the grandeur of the Chabet Gorge, the African Corniche, and the beautiful Kabylia Mountains until Algiers was reached and passed and this beautiful run to Oran ended all. How it unrolls itself to our mind's eye as our ship leaves port and we realise that our journey is over.

As we turn for a farewell to the city the sun cuts through a rift of the western heavens, flooding the land and sea, giving us our last touch of African sunshine, our last glimpse of

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